

The Brooklyn Paper

Brooklyn's Real Newspaper

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BROOKLYN HEIGHTS-DOWNTOWN EDITION
INCLUDING DUMBO

AWP/20 pages • Vol. 30, No. 17 • Saturday, April 28, 2007 • FREE



The mayor's congestion pricing plan amounts to a toll on Brooklyn drivers, some local pols say.

TAKING ITS TOLL

Brooklyn pols blast congestion pricing

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

Mayor Bloomberg's proposal to charge drivers \$8 to enter Downtown Manhattan is an unfair burden on Brooklyn motorists, pols said this week, even as traffic experts said it could ease gridlock through the borough.

The so-called "congestion pricing" scheme would require most motorists who drive below 86th Street in Manhattan to pay the fee between 6 am and 6 pm. The mayor says his goal is to reduce traffic and pollution while generating revenue for mass transit.

But Brooklyn electeds weren't buying it. "It's a regressive tax on working middle-class families and small-business owners," said Rep. Anthony Weiner (D-Sheepshead Bay).

Councilman Vincent Gentile, a Bay Ridge Democrat, chided the mayor for "punishing Brooklynites who are forced to drive due to a lack of an adequate public transportation."

Bloomberg insisted that the "punishment" to city residents would be nominal because most people who drive into Downtown Manhattan

**Apartment
over
the BQE?**
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Marty flips: Fee worth a new look

Many Brooklynites are calling Mayor Bloomberg's congestion pricing plan a tax on the boroughs. Not Borough President Markowitz, though. This week, the Beep said he hadn't taken a position on the plan, despite very strong statements in the past towards anything that smacked of a toll on the East River bridges.

—Rubinstein

"Some ideas will fly like an eagle. This is a turkey. It's just totally unfair to Brooklyn." *New York Daily News, Feb. 16, 2002*

"To try and rationalize that East River tolls as a 'fair tax' because people in Manhattan are able to afford more expensive real estate is ridiculous." *Daily News, April 6, 2003*

Bridge tolls would be a "tremendous economic burden on the businesses and residents of Brooklyn, many of whom are forced to drive because they have no other public transportation options."

Daily News, Sept. 30, 2003

"If there was a way that it would not become an additional tax burden on residents of the boroughs of New York City and at the same time it would generate revenues for major infusions of resource in public transportation... then it's something worthy of review. ... I don't know if what is being done in London could be transferred here to New York City. However... it is certainly worthy of looking into."

The Brooklyn Paper, November, 2006

"I have many concerns [about congestion pricing]. However, it is worthy of full review. ... I haven't come out against it, nor have I come out in support of it."

The Brooklyn Paper, April, 2007

This does not compute

Tech alums wonder: Where's the blacksmith shop?

By Ariella Cohen
The Brooklyn Paper

Where did all the slide rules go — and where do all the books fit with all these computers on the desks?

These were the questions in the air last week at Brooklyn Technical HS as the techies of times bygone descended upon their Fort Greene alma mater for a reunion.

"I remember one computer in the whole school," said class of 1967 grad Philip Morris. "It was the size of two refrigerators and had its own language."

"We started it with a punch card," chimed in his one-time classmate, Jonathan Goldman.

"Every time I got mad at the teacher, I used to bend the card so the program wouldn't start," the gray-haired former geek said.

Morris and Goldman sat in a computer lab — it was a metal shop when they went to the school — marveling at the



Aira Contreras, a senior at Brooklyn Technical HS, shows John Lyons, class of 1967, computers.

transformation Tech had undergone since their salad days.

But they were certainly not the most wowed over by the digital-age makeover of the 85-year-old engineering, math and science school.

John Lyons, a member of the class of '67 who showed up in his letter sweater and a few valedictorian pins, explained the difference in three words: the personal computer.

"Students went from drawing with pen and ink to using a mouse," Lyons said. Everyone seemed to understand how much the meaning of the word "tech" had changed over the decades.

"We had blacksmithing and a foundry," said 1947 grad, Mark Drummond. The retired telephone engineer recalled building sections of naval ships in shop class.

"I graduated before the transistor was invented," he said, putting a desk that he said once would have had a tool vice attached to it.

"But we had a computer, too," he said. "It was called an abacus."

BEE-LIEVE IT!

Keeper: Cellphones killing honeybees



By Matthew Lysiak
The Brooklyn Paper

Honeybees are dying all over the country — and one Brooklyn beekeeper thinks that cellphones are the culprit!

Brooklyn bee-maven David Graves, who sells his high-end "Beekeeper" brand honey at the Union Square Farmers Market, is sounding the alarm about the possible cause of the crisis that has claimed the lives of billions of bees in 24 states.

"Every year, more and more bees are just disappearing and I am real concerned that cellphones are messing with their ability to find their way," said the beekeeper.

Graves said he has about a dozen rooftop hives throughout the boroughs, with one on Bergen Street in Brooklyn, and claims to have made much of his honey on the rooftops of Bay Ridge (though he likes to keep the exact locations secret).

Graves says the apian "die-off" is playing havoc with the production of honey and other products from the hive.

"I have had to raise the price of my honey this year to \$15 for a half-pound," Graves said. "I am anticipating having a bad year and have already put the order in for 30 packages of honeybees from South Carolina."

More than half-a-billion bee colonies have been affected by a mysterious bee die-off — and more and more, people think this "colony collapse disorder" is due to radiation from mobile phones and the antennae that help you reach out and touch someone.

How important is this bee-tastrophe? Well, as Einstein once said, "If honey bees become extinct, human society

See **BEEs** on page 7



A CUT BELOW

Gersh's trim not \$400

THE CHOICE IS YOURS America: The \$400 haircut of Democrat John Edwards (above left) or the \$15 haircut of Weirde Gersht (above right).

Before you answer, consider the sage words that a crotchety old barber in Bay Ridge once told me: "Son, the only difference between a good haircut and a bad haircut is three days."

Which brings me back to Edwards. The Democratic presidential candidate added a second difference between a good haircut and a bad one amid revelations that he paid a hair stylist \$400 to make him look pretty — oh, so pretty — on the campaign trail.

Far more than three days have passed since the news broke — and Edwards' haircut still looks bad. It's

**THE BROOKLYN
ANGLE** By Gersh
Kuntzman
DECISION 2008

tough to be a man of the people when you've just spent more than the cost of 250 Bud tallboys on your hair.

Not that I'm in any position to lecture a man who may be the future president, but I've never spent more than \$10 on a haircut — and look how good I look!

All seriousness aside, given Edwards' predicament, when I needed a trim this week, I headed straight for the Clinton Street Barber Shop, a new

See **TRIM** on page 18

Ratner's wrecking ball hits, protested

By Ariella Cohen
and Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

Developer Bruce Ratner began demolition of three more buildings within the Atlantic Yards footprint this week, days after dozens of opponents called for the developer to call off his wrecking ball until pending litigation is resolved.

Protesters gathered on Monday morning at 191 Flushing Ave., to complain that the demolitions would create blight in and around Ratner's proposed 16-tower, arena, residential and office complex — especially if the lawsuits are successful and the project is never built.

"We say to Gov. Spitzer, we

need you now!" said Councilwoman Letitia James (D-Prospect Heights). "This community was forced to file lawsuits because [of the lack of] government oversight."

The rally came three days after a federal judge ruled that Ratner could start knocking down buildings in the footprint, despite several cases still percolating through the court system.

Last Friday, Justice Joan Madden rejected opponents' request for a restraining order that would have barred demolitions until a May 3 hearing in one of the cases.

Up to 15 structures are slated to fall in the next few months, the first steps towards completion.

See **BALL** on page 7



Signs of the times: Phyllis Wyrny carried these watercolor posters (left and center) at Monday's rally, where young Sophie Kelleher (right) made her voice heard, too.

INSIDE

500 things to do this week
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SMART mom
What to tell the children
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EDITORIAL
Good Bloomy, Bad Bloomy
PAGE 15



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Homemade pasta filled with ricotta, tomato & basil

Gnocchi di Melanzane
Potato & Eggplant gnocchi with gratinéed pink sauce

Insalata Organica
Organic salad with balsamic vinaigrette dressing & extra virgin olive oil

Minestrone
Traditional vegetable soup

Zuppa d'Asparagi
Cream of Asparagus garnished with crostini

Penne Rigate al Pomodoro
Penne with fresh tomato & basil

Risotto Primavera
Risotto served with diced vegetables

Entrée

Salmon Tornado
Salmon over a bed of spinach with lobster

Trota Alle Mandorle
Trout sautéed with almonds, white wine & lemon sauce

Tilapia Oraganato
Tilapia fish topped with bread crumbs & herbs

Petto Di Pollo Al Rosmarino E Funghi
Chicken breast with rosemary & mushrooms

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Grilled Sirloin steak... Additional \$4.95

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Cotoletta di Maialino Farcito
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Dessert

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Coffee or tea. (Cappuccino & Espresso \$1.50 Extra)

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Cuore Di Mamma
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HERE TO

EDITORS' PICKS

SUNDAY

April 29



Great AGAPE

This afternoon, the 12-member Children of AGAPE singing group will be performing their only public concert this year at the Kane Street Synagogue. The show will be a fundraiser for the AGAPE Orphanage in Durban, South Africa, which burned down two years ago. You can also catch these kids singing in the documentary "We Are Together."

2 pm at the Kane Street Synagogue (236 Kane St. between Court and Clinton streets at Cobble Hill). \$20, \$10 for kids. For information, call 965-1111.

TUESDAY

May 1



Travel plans

Installation artist 'Youme Landowne brings her "People's Democratic Republic of Brooklyn" show to the Brooklyn Public Library. Tonight, the artist will speak while attendees have a chance to view the handmade Brooklyn passports that she has constructed. Leave home early — customs can be a real hassle.

6 pm at the Brooklyn Public Library's central branch (on Grand Army Plaza at Eastern Parkway). Free. For information, call (718) 230-2100 or visit www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org.

WEDNESDAY

May 2



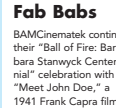
Parrrrry

Tickets to the St. Ann's Warehouse Gala Benefit might be expensive, but in a world of stuffy fundraisers and cold mini quiche, this evening is bound to stand out. Instead of a string quartet, St. Ann's will be premiering Hal Willner's "Rogues Gallery Live," a collection of sea songs, pirate ballads and chants. With the woeful decline of pirate-themed nights out, this is a truly rare opportunity.

6:30 pm at St. Ann's Warehouse (38 Water St. at Main Street in DUMBO). \$250 and up. For information, call (718) 834-8794 x11.

THURSDAY

May 3



Fab Babs

BAMCinematek continues their "Ball of Fire: Barbara Stanwyck Centennial" celebration with "Meet John Doe," a 1941 Frank Capra film that finds the Brooklyn-born Stanwyck playing a brassy newspaper reporter — our very favorite kind — who prints a fake letter to the editor and spends two hours scrambling to cover for her lies.

7 pm and 9:30 pm at BAM Rose Cinemas (30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place in Fort Greene). \$10. For information, call (718) 636-4100.

FRIDAY

May 4



Bikini season

It might not be warm enough for the beach, but for Witches in Bikinis, the borough's horror rock super group, it's always swimsuit season. The six "Alien Surfer Babes" will be heading to the Hook (Hock) \$12 in advance, \$18 at the door. For information, call (718) 797-3007.

FREE DAYS IN BROOKLYN

Compiled by Susan Rosenthal Jay

SAT, APRIL 28

OUTDOORS AND TOURS

SAKURA MATSURI: Brooklyn Botanic Garden hosts its annual event featuring its 220 cherry trees. Celebrate Japanese culture with over 60 events and performances. Traditional and modern Japanese music and dance, taiko drumming, ikebana flower arranging, cooking demos, tea ceremonies, more. \$5 for adults and students. Noon to 6 pm. 1030 Washington Ave. (718) 623-1220.

BEACH WALK: Jerry's Shells hosts a walk and observe the beaches of Brooklyn. \$10. 1 pm. Meet at the information booth at the Fort Greene Park. (718) 696-6617.

FORT GREENE PARK: Urban Park Rangers hosts an exploration of Fort Greene Park. Learn about the 146-foot tall Marcy Monument. 1 pm. Meet at the Visitor's Center, near the Myrtle Avenue and Washington Park entrance. Call 311 for info. Free.

PROSPECT PARK TOUR: Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment hosts a walk in the park and observe the work of Vaux and Olmsted. \$13. \$10 members. \$8 seniors and students. 2 pm to 4 pm. Meet at southeast corner of Prospect Park West and Union Street. (718) 788-8500.

PERFORMANCE

PERFORMANCE: Brooklyn-Queen Conservatory of Music performs live music from morning until evening. Program features the Conservatory's Youth Orchestra, Children's Chorus, classical trios and quartets. More. 10 am to 8 pm. Atlantic Terminal Mall, 139 Flatbush Ave. (718) 834-3400. Free.

CONCERT: Long Island University hosts a student jazz concert. 1 pm. Kimmel Theatre, corner of Flatbush Avenue Extension and Delafu Avenue. (718) 485-1668. Free.

DANCE: Cynthia King Dance Studio presents its annual dance concert. \$20. 2 pm and 5 pm. Flatbush-Tompkins Congregational Church, 401 E. 18th St. (718) 437-0701.

ORIGINAL PLAY: "Call the Home Play by Red Hook Teams" is presented by Falconworks Artists Group. Six teens from Red Hook, professional actors and directors, perform in their own plays. 3 pm and 7 pm. PS 15, 71 Sullivan St. (347) 512-4639. Free.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE: Fort Hamilton High School Music and Performing Arts Department presents "Annie Get Your Gun." \$10. 3 pm. 8801 Shore Rd. (718) 748-5200.

THE RHAPSODY PLAYERS: presents "Brooklyn: A Bridge to Music." \$12. \$10 seniors. 7:30 pm. St. Alban's Church, 6120 Bay Pkwy. (718) 236-0124.

FACULTY SHOWCASE: Pianist Alan Kinsley performs a Beethoven and Chopin program. \$10 for adults and \$5 for students and seniors. 8 pm. Brooklyn-Queens Conservatory of Music, 58 Seventh Ave. (718) 641-8910.

STUDIO: presents "The Bridge to Music." \$12. \$10 seniors. 7:30 pm. St. Alban's Church, 6120 Bay Pkwy. (718) 236-0124.

PAPER MOON PLAYERS: presents "Bravo Brooklyn!" a musical celebration of classic songs from his Broadway shows. \$10. 8 pm. 235 E. 23rd St. (718) 641-5341.

CBBC: Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts presents Grammy-winning singer Donnie Waverick. \$20 to \$40. 8 pm. Walt Whitman Theater at Brooklyn College, one block from the intersection of Flatbush and Montross avenues. (718) 951-4600.

BARGE MUSIC: concert of Kernerati. 4 pm.



Clowning around: On April 28, Gitana Rosa Gallery in Williamsburg presents Mark Parish's video installation "Let's All Drink to the Death of a Clown!" at 7 pm.

See Sunday, April 29.

CHILDREN

SPRING CARNIVAL: PS 58 hosts its annual event featuring live music, school performances, crafts and more. 10 am to 4 pm. Smith and Carroll streets. (718) 330-9322.

ARTY FACTS: Brooklyn Museum invites kids to talk "All Your Senses." \$8, \$4

students and seniors, free to members and children 12 and under. 11 am to 2 pm. 200 Eastern Pkwy. (718) 638-5000.

UNIVERSO CIRCUS: Family entertainment features acts from around the world. \$17.50 to \$25 adults, \$15.50 to \$23 kids and under. Noon, 4:30 pm and 8 pm. Prospect Park, Enter park at Parkside and Ocean avenues. www.universocircus.com.

CIVIC CALENDAR

MONDAY, APRIL 30

Community Board 6: Public safety and environmental protection committees. Cobble Hill Community Meeting Room 2502 Baltic St. between Court and Clinton streets. 6:30 pm. Call (718) 645-3207 for information.

TUESDAY, MAY 1

Fifth Avenue BID Steering Committee and Park Slope Fifth Avenue Merchants Association: Weekly meeting. Call (718) 871-6340 for meeting time and location.

Community Board 2: Economic development and job creation committee. Long Island University, Jonas Baron (11 University Plaza, at Flatbush and Delafu avenues). 6 pm. Call (718) 596-5410 for information.

76th Precinct Community Council: Monthly meeting. 76th Precinct station-house (191 Union St., between Henry and Hicks streets). 7:30 pm. Call (718) 834-3211 for information.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2

Community Board 2: Health, environment and social services committees. Brooklyn Hospital, North Pavilion (Delafu Avenue at St. Felix Street). 6 pm. Call (718) 596-5410 for information.

THURSDAY, MAY 3

Senior fair: On the agenda: City agencies staff booths to tell seniors about a wide variety of programs. St. Patrick's Church gymnasium (511 Fourth Ave.), room 3 pm. Call (718) 238-6044 for information.

Community forum with Councilman Vince Gentile: On the agenda: City budget priorities, sanitation ticket issues and other community concerns. Holy Family Home (1740 84th St. between 7th and New Utrecht avenues). 7 pm. Call (718) 748-5200 for information.

Concerned Citizens of Bensonhurst: On the agenda: Update from Assemblyman William Colton and representatives from the Department of Environmental Protection. St. Finbars Community Room (Bath Avenue and Bay 20th Street). 7:30 pm. Call (718) 688-0079 for information.

To list an event in the Civic Calendar, e-mail news@brooklynpaper.com or fax (718) 834-9378.



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Brooklyn's Real Newspaper

Published weekly by Brooklyn Paper Publications Inc.
 at 55 Washington Street, Suite 624, Brooklyn, New York 11201 • Phone (718) 834-9350

The Brooklyn Paper's six zones incorporate the following newspapers:

DOWNTOWN Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Hill Paper, Downtown News, Fort Greene-Clinton Hill Paper.
PARK SLOPE Park Slope Paper, Sunset Park Paper, Windsor Terrace Paper.
BAY RIDGE Bay Ridge Paper, Bensonhurst Paper.
KENSINGTON/KNOWLEDGE Midwood Paper, Kensington Paper, Ocean Parkway Paper.
NORTH BROOKLYN Greenpoint Paper, Williamsburg Paper.
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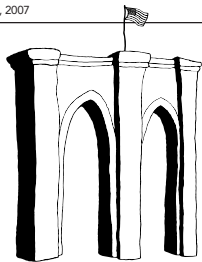
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THE stoop

BROOKLYN HEIGHTS—DOWNTOWN DUMBO

The 1.25-million-dollar insult?

Herve Poussot: Racist baker or gruff-but-lovable Frenchman? Let's go to the court papers!

The popular DUMBO confectioner has been accused of racism against a black customer because he allegedly told her to get out of his bakery, Almondine, on the night of Feb. 15.

Almondine is a small, unassuming patisserie on the Right Bank of Water Street in DUMBO, next to a bus stop. It is redolent with the smells of quiches, fresh bread and strawberry tarts. Poussot, the proud owner, is often seen in the glass-walled kitchen, creating the next generation of mouthwatering goods.

Elaine James-France — a 54-year-old black woman, according to her lawsuit, which she filed this week in Brooklyn Supreme Court — says she went into the tiny bakery to buy a croissant on that cold February night, and was just standing there when Poussot advanced on her menacingly.

"Did you get what you needed?" Poussot allegedly asked her. When she nodded, the white Poussot allegedly continued, "Then get out. This is not a bus stop!"

So James-France left. Now she wants \$1.25 million for pain and suffering over Poussot's alleged "discrimination."

"Plaintiff was deeply humiliated, embarrassed, traumatized and ashamed at being ordered to leave Almondine," the suit reads. "But in fear for her safety, she complied."

Four days later, however, James-France returned to the bakery with her employer and demanded an apology.

Poussot refused, claiming that even if he had thrown James-France out, it was not racism, but a result of her buying coffee from another store and then bringing it into his bakery.

"Get the [expletive] out of my store and don't ever come back," he said, according to the suit.

Here's where everything gets murkier than a double-espresso. According to James-France, Poussot started roughing up her boss. But when officers from the 84th Precinct arrived, they arrested her boss, not Poussot, and charged him with three misdemeanor charges stemming from the altercation, according to the criminal complaint.

James-France's boss, a lawyer who works in the same Court Street firm as her lawyer, was also hit with a marijuana charge, a violation. He could not be reached for comment at press time.

But Poussot's mouthpiece, lawyer Ralph Hochberg, thinks he knows what's going on. "Their lawsuit [demanding \$1.25 million for Poussot's alleged discrimination] is purely a retaliatory move" that resulted from the assault arrest, he said.

"I've known Mr. Poussot for many years, and he is anything but a racist," he added.

James-France's lawyer, Kenneth Jones, disagreed. "His general demeanor towards her seemed racist," he told me.

Seemed? Objection, your honor! Speculation!

Of course, Jones offered additional evidence that Poussot is a racist who wants "an all white clientele."

How does he know this? Because three years ago, when Poussot opened Almondine, he told The Brooklyn Paper that he hoped his shop would be a "nice bakery with a European feel, right here in Brooklyn."

And we all know that means he's a racist, right?

Kudos to the **Busy Chef**, which opened last week on the "cursed" corner of **Canterbury** and **Henry** streets. Their baked goods seem to be a hit in the nabe. As we can attest, their delicious cookies are particularly good, which hopefully means they'll stick around longer than their predecessor, the Food Maestro. ... A **Pace University** student was arrested on Wednesday morning and charged with tossing cinder blocks off the roof of the **St. George Hotel** onto Henry Street below, nearly smashing a truck's windshield. Perhaps it's not so bad that the Pace students will be moving out after all (see story, right). ... Are you always stuck about what to get your mom for **Mother's Day**? Here's an idea — take her on a shopping tour of DUMBO. Some of DUMBO's retailers and restaurants will be welcoming Brooklyn's moms with special Mother's Day Weekend promotions, May 11-13. With every-

one from **Jacques Torres** to **St. Ann's Warehouse** participating, you can find something for even the most difficult of moms. Visit www.dumbonyc.org for information. ... While we're in the neighborhood, we'd like to make a special request of the Duke of DUMBO, **David Valentas**: As much as we love the aesthetic of the big, shiny, silver '70s embedded into the pavement outside **70 Washington St.**, is there any chance you could make it slip-proof?

Email us at Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com

HEIGHTS LOWDOWN



Christie Rizk



Despite rumors, this building at the corner of Clinton and Remsen streets in Brooklyn Heights will not be torn down soon.

Building not for sale — yet!

Owner tries to debunk panic, but nabe suspicious

By Christie Rizk
The Brooklyn Paper

The owners of the two-story building at Clinton and Remsen streets denied a published report that they are about to sell the building — a story that created a panic across Brooklyn Heights that the building would be torn down for a 14-story tower.

It may someday become just such a building — a tower is legal under the current zoning, after all — but a representative of the owner told The Stoop this week that the building was not on the market.

Yes. "The owners just wanted to know [the value of] what they own, so they retained us to evaluate the possibilities," said Barry Kimchy of the Marcus and Millichap real-estate firm.

The building, located at the corner of Remsen Street, is inside the historically protected section of Brooklyn Heights, but outside a zoning area that bars buildings rising above 50 feet.

As such, a buyer could construct something that would tower over the rowhouses of Remsen Street and obscure views all over the area.

The panic began after a newspaper reported that the owners had put the building up for sale for \$22 million.

But Kimchy said the \$22 million figure is merely an estimate of the building's maximum value, and not an asking price.

Still, some members of the Heights establishment said they remained cautious.

"This is a very sensitive site," said Judy Stanton, the executive director of the Brooklyn Heights Association.

"If they build something that's too tall ... it would change the character of the neighborhood."

"Building heights are a big factor when it comes to what is and is not historically accurate," Stanton added.

Stay tuned.

No 'Pace' to dorm life

The Brooklyn Paper

See you in September. Despite a decision this week by Pace University to pull 500 students out of their dormitory on Clark Street, the 800-bed facility will likely be busy again when the fall semester starts.

"Like nature, real estate abhors a vacuum," said Rob Perris, district manager of Community Board 2. "I seriously doubt that this building will remain vacant."

Pace announced the move last week, prompting speculation about the future of the dormitory, which is at 55 Clark St. But this week, the company that runs the facility promised that it would be business as usual in the new school year.

"The Clark Street building is one of our premier student housing residences," said Joan Cear of Educational Housing Services, which runs Clark Hall and other dorms throughout the city. "It will definitely be filled with college students come the fall."

Students from a dozen other schools are housed in the building, added Cear, so Pace's slots will be easy to fill.

Pace, meanwhile, is moving its students to a fancy new building on John Street, near the university's campus in Manhattan.

"We were very happy on Clark Street, but we're also looking forward to creating a more unified downtown campus," said university spokesman Chris Cory.

Proximity to campus is good news for students. The bad news? Their housing will cost \$2,000 more.

"It sucks that we have to pay more," said one student. "But it'll be nice to live in Manhattan. It's nice here, but too quiet."

So much for turning Brooklyn Heights into a college town.



Pace University will no longer house students in the dorm building at 55 Clark St.

one student. "But it'll be nice to live in Manhattan. It's nice here, but too quiet."

So much for turning Brooklyn Heights into a college town.

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THE STOOP

CARROLL GARDENS - COBBLE HILL BOERUM HILL RED HOOK

A rat's life on Pacific Street

Pacific Street between Third Avenue and Nevins Street is a rat's paradise. On this very green stretch of Boerum Hill, rats the size of tabby cats gnaw away entire gardens in a night's time. They take over the block every night like young professionals on Smith Street.

"If you go outside at night, you see packs of them walking down the street, totally fearless," said Sarah Leah Whitson, who lives on the block.

"It's an epidemic," she added. On one recent night, a crew of the beady-eyed critters devoured Whitson's entire herb garden, gorging on delicate stalks of parsley, clusters of Thai mint and several pesto dinners' worth of basil.

"After that," Whitson said, "I started thinking about starting the Boerum Hill Hunting Club. We would hunt rats instead of deer."

Whitson's neighbor, Robin Miller, said that she has been forced to explain away the bloody rat carcasses staining the pavement. "I tell my 2-year-old daughter that the [rats] didn't have time to get home to their beds," said Miller.

Indeed, neighbors are ready to de-ratify Pacific Street. Recently, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, a stately church at the corner of Third Avenue and Pacific Street, brought in a pest control expert to make sure the vermin keep out of the pews.

"I thought I was seeing watermelon seeds," said Muriel Tillingham, an official at the church. "Then I found out it was rat droppings and became very concerned."

Tillingham's hired gun called the rat activity in the area "excessive."

"They're a problem all over the city," said John Pimpinella of Horizon Pest Control. "But on Pacific Street, I saw hundreds of them living in alleys."

He blamed the explosion of rat-displacing construction in the area, as well as the age-old vermin lure of messy Dumpsters, litter and gasp, greenery.

As it turns out, the notoriously indiscriminate rats seem to attack organic offerings with the same vigor they have traditionally applied to rotting fast food and leaky trash bags.

"Rats are really attracted to the roots and plants," Pimpinella explained.

At Bethlehem, fear of flower-eating vermin has incited church leaders to forbid any new greenery on its grounds.

"They seek the greenery as a place of refuge," Tillingham said of the rats' catholic tastes.

Yet when it comes down to it, the battle against rats may be another one of the church's eternal struggles, she said.

"I am manic about being tidy about food and not littering," she said. "But the truth is, the rats have been here longer than we have, and they will probably outlive us too."

THE KITCHEN SINK

Tell the varmints to vamoose once and for all: **Bethlehem Lutheran Church**, at 490 Pacific St., is hosting a community meeting on May 9 at 7 pm about the rat problem. Call (718) 624-0242 for information. ... And the Big Green thumb goes to **Margaret Casack**. Casack, a founder of the Hoyt Street Garden, has been named the 2007 **Brooklyn Gardener of the Year** by The NYC Community Garden Coalition. Check out Casack's handwork at the lush garden she built from the dirt on up at the corner of Atlantic Avenue and Hoyt Street. ... Organic kids coming.

The sink has learned that Fort Greene's all-organic **Smooth Cafe** is considering opening a new location in Boerum Hill. Oooh la la. ... The celeb kid band **Care Bears on Fire** will play an afternoon show on Saturday, April 28, at the **Liberty Heights Tap Room**, 34 Van Dyke St. Call (718) 246-8050 for info. ... Tacos up! The food vendors, baseball players, futbol stars and mariachi bands are expected to be in full swing this weekend at the ballfields in **Red Hook**. Come with a full stomach and a set of earplugs. The bands get loud! ... Summer stealin': Warm weather makes everyone want a bike, including **hoodlums**. Last week, a handful of bikers were stripped of their wheels on **Smith Street**, a clerk at the street's **Aden News** shop told the Stoop.

Heed the warning: lock up both wheels. ... Last chance to create a "community-driven development plan" for Atlantic Yards. On April 28, the **Council of Brooklyn Neighborhoods** will host a planning session to come up with a Yards alternative at **Hanson Place United Methodist Church** (144 St. Felix St., at Hanson Place, in Fort Greene). The forum starts at 10 am.

Email us at Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com



Ariella Cohen



Ahoy, mates! Megan Hesselhalter (right) and Sasha Porter relax on a houseboat that is berthed along the Gowanus Canal.

Brooklyn's own boat people

One couple's hangout on the Gowanus (yes, the Gowanus)

By Ariella Cohen

The Brooklyn Paper

Behind a locked gate at the end of a dead-end street, a tiny community of houseboats is growing on the banks of Lavender Lake. Its owners — four people on three boats — believe that their watery ways could help New York in its quest for sustainability.

"You can't ignore how much waste you are creating when you have to carry it onto land yourself," said Sasha Porter, who owns a former World War II rescue boat she and her partner Megan Hesselhalter call "Eco-Ark."

They don't technically live on the floating one-bedroom — most recently home to the Empty Vessel Project art collective — which sits between Union and Carroll streets. But they do spend a lot of time there, almost entirely off the grid. They have a circa-1924 kebox, a small electricity generator and a wood-burning stove they imported

from a friend's cabin in Maine. They have no running water.

Their toilet consists of a beige, plastic seat and a sawdust-filled bucket.

Each time one waste bucket fills up, Porter and Hesselhalter move it to a small closet in the head of the boat and eventually, cart it away. Soon, the pair plans to begin composting the sawdust-coated poop and using it as soil for a flower garden.

"When you compost human waste, it loses 90 percent of its mass," Porter said, sitting in a deck chair on the rear helm of the boat and looking out at her backyard shimmered alongside the boat (is that a rainbow or an oil slick? Tough to say along the Gowanus).

The composing plan is just one of the duo's many green dreams for Eco-Ark.

Recently, they also began to work on designs for a solar-powered freezer and a water-conserving device that would catch rain in a roof basin made of old umbrellas.

"We want to be a lab for sustainable design," said Porter, a 26-year-old cabinet-maker.

Including the cost of their limited utilities, Porter said she and Hesselhalter pay about as much for their Gowanus hideaway as they did in their old digs in Williamsburg.

While the legality of the floating one-bedroom is about as murky as the canal itself, Porter and Hesselhalter are hoping that city officials will someday allow them to get permits to actually live on the boat.

By doing so, they say, they can serve as a model for affordable, eco-friendly housing in a space-strained city.

Of course, that's the long-term plan. In the short term, the couple will have to lift anchor this summer, when the city turns off the turbine that brings fresh water into the canal.

The coming stretch is more than even these boat people are willing to endure.



The Brooklyn Paper / Eric Lipton

'Light' is on in Hook

Brooklyn's one-stoplight town is growing up.

City workers installed Red Hook's second stoplight this week, slowing traffic at the intersection of Van Brunt and Sullivan streets (above) and pleasing residents who had called for the light since a pedestrian was killed there last spring.

Since then, a large Fairway grocery store has brought many vehicles through the once-sleepy intersection, which is in front of the neighborhood elementary school, PS 15.

"There were so many cars and trucks going fast and not paying attention," said Red Hooker Elsie Micles.

The neighborhood's first stoplight was installed near the Brooklyn cruise terminal when it opened last year.

Could the one-time red light district be getting even more? The Red Hook Civic Association is already asking for two more traffic lights, said John McGettrick, the group's co-chair.

"The Sullivan Street light was a long-overdue first step, but much more must be done," he said.

—Ariella Cohen

Canal species not endangered

The Brooklyn Paper

A perfect storm of circumstances, including the less-than-perfect No' Easter last week, has sent a record number of condos into the Gowanus Canal, according to volunteers at this week's Earth Day cleanup of the canal zone.

The explosion in the population of "Coney Island whitefish" is not only due to a city giveaway of condos in the Gowanus Canal, but also to a city giveaway of condos in the Gowanus Canal, according to volunteers at this week's Earth Day cleanup of the canal zone.

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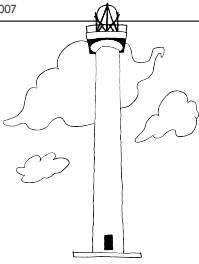
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THE STOOB

FORT GREENE-CLINTON HILL

Too much green in Fort Greene

Luxury units in the Forte condos — Fort Greene's first new residential skyscraper — officially went on the market last week, beginning another chapter in the neighborhood's complete transformation into Brooklyn's own Upper West Side.

For those who maintain their gaze at ground level, the Forte is that massive, flatiron-shaped, glass-walled skyscraper nearing completion on Fulton Street and Ashland Place. Its 30 stories will house 108 luxury units.

Last week, I got a chance to visit the Forte's first completed apartments at the sales kick-off. Like the building itself, this was an A-list event. Expensive suits and pricey pastries, coffee flowing freely from silver samovars, gourmet quiche with slices of roasted red pepper on top. And tout le monde was there, from Downtown development czar Joe Chan to Borough President Markowitz.

During the requisite pal-on-the-back speculating, Markowitz made a prescient comment.

"In the days to come, when New Yorkers say 'Downtown,' they'll mean Downtown Brooklyn," he proclaimed with the typical zest.

His geography may have been slightly askew — everyone knows that the BAM Cultural District is inspired by Lincoln Center far uptown — but he got the gist: Fort Greene is part of the new Manhattan.

From the Williamsburgh Savings Bank building to the state's planned sale of 55 Hanson Place, the neighborhood surrounding BAM is turning as pricey as the Upper West Side.

The Forte's gorgeous one-bedrooms start at \$600,000, its two-bedrooms at \$800,000, and its three-bedrooms at more than \$1 million, said David Perry, the head of sales for Claret Group. You'll get a lot of luxury for that — a "sumptuous and theatrically designed lobby," 24-hour concierge service, a doorman, a fitness center (no need that Crunch Gym next door), a roof deck, gorgeous views of Manhattan and Brooklyn, enormous windows, oak-strip flooring, and, of course, the mild resentment of your brownstone neighbors.

So those of us who'd rather live in a nice, middle-class, racially diverse community in Brooklyn — not Manhattan — see the Forte's rise as bitter-sweet.

Yeah, the architects at FXFOWLE — the same firm that designed the Reuters and Conde Nast buildings in Times Square — did a nice job. The building is lovely.

The thing is, few of us moved to Brooklyn because we wanted to live in the city's "Downtown," or Brooklyn's "Lincoln Center," or any of the other metaphors so often bandied about.

Had I wanted to live in Downtown Manhattan, or its Brooklyn approximation, I would have. Maybe I could have squeezed myself and my two cats into some sort of itty-bitty studio, with a bed lofted over the line box and a hotplate for a kitchen.

One thing's for sure, I certainly wouldn't have been able to live the high life there, or for that matter, here, in Fort Greene, and in first newly constructed luxury tower.

And if I, a middle-class single woman, can't afford to live here, then where's the single mother with two kids going to live? Maybe that's the point.

Welcome to Forte Greene.

online at BrooklynPaper.com

GREENE ACRES



Dana Rubinstein



Funkytown

This funky building is Pratt Institute's new \$11.9-million design center featuring environmentally friendly design elements and a venue for video art. Tom Hanrahan, the dean of Pratt's School of Architecture, designed the pavilion with a "green" ventilation system that allows cool air to enter the building through the north window (pictured above, from the front and from the side), and hot air to rise out through the southern courtyard. The northern exposure will also be used as a canvas on which to project art. Situated on the DeKalb Avenue edge of the Clinton Hill campus, the Juliana Curran Terian Design Center is named for an alumna who doled out \$5 million for the project. It was formally unveiled on April 17.

— Dana Rubinstein



C'Hill to city: Save us!

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

The city has given an 18-story apartment building on stately Washington Avenue a tentative green light, despite activists' calls for the city to swing a wrecking ball through the proposal.

The apartment building, which would be bounded by Myrtle Avenue and Hall Street, is "totally out of scale with the brownstone community," said Councilwoman Letitia James (D-Fort Greene), who added she wants to delay the project until a proposed downzoning of Fort Greene and Clinton Hill is approved. The rezoning is still percolating through the public-review process, and will need at least seven months before it could go into effect.

It's doubtful that James will be able to hold off the development for that long, especially since the city's Buildings Department has al-

ready given the developer a "conditional" approval to the plan.

There are some "outstanding objections" that are minor and can be addressed easily by submitting revised plans reflecting the required changes, said Buildings Department spokeswoman Kate Lindquist. These "minor" revisions include a scale-down of the building's size to conform with current zoning laws, and alterations to make the building more handicapped accessible.

The neighborhood's opposition to the development isn't just rooted in the building's size, which contrasts markedly with its two-to-four-story neighbors.

"This will create a wall separating the Wallabout community from the rest of Clinton Hill," said Sharon Barnes, head of the Society for Clinton Hill.

Other residents feel the developer blind-sided them.

"Initially, it was supposed to be [a much shorter] building," said Peter Cheng, a Clinton Hill resident and the manager of Kum Kau, the Myrtle Avenue Chinese restaurant that abuts the building site. "They kind of changed the plans without telling anybody. They were, for lack of a better word, sneaky about it."

According to James, the site has had two developers. The first planned to build a six-story building, but then "flipped" the property to the new developer, who apparently added another 12 stories.

The developer did not respond to repeated requests for comment, but James insisted she would keep on fighting.

"We are organizing an action plan to force or convince the developer that a smaller building would be more in character with the surrounding community and would still net him a profit," she said.

Less 'alternate-side'

The Brooklyn Paper

Like adolescents to a compulsively neat parent, two elected officials are trying to reason with the city's Sanitation Department, arguing that Fort Greene and Clinton Hill do not need twice-a-week street cleaning.

"Once per week is plenty," claimed Councilman David Yassky (D-Brooklyn Heights), who is teaming up with Councilwoman Letitia James (D-Fort Greene) on a bill that would allow community boards to determine how often their neighborhood streets are cleaned.

The current, twice-a-week cleaning schedule means that residents sometimes must move their car four times a week (twice, if they park strategically). By contrast, Brooklyn Heights and Park Slope residents can enjoy the luxury of once-a-week driving and fewer chances to get a ticket.

"It's a really crummy way to squeeze dollars out of New Yorkers," said Yassky.

Yassky and James said they had to take such a drastic step because the Department of Sanitation is strongly opposed to the idea. In January, when The Stoop first reported on the issue, Sanitation spokes-

woman Kathy Dawkins said, "We have no plans to reduce the amount of street-cleaning in Fort Greene or Clinton Hill."

"The only way to do it is legislate it in the budget process," Yassky said.

Perhaps, but Yassky and James aren't only fighting Sanitation — they're also fighting some residents.

"I would rather not have our schedule changed," said Susan Butler, a member of the Fort Greene Association and a motorist. "It gives me, as a driver, an opportunity to find a spot. There's turnover, because alternate-side of the street parking is four times a week."

"If alternate-side-of-the-street parking were less frequent, then some people might just park there and not move their cars," she added.

— Rubinstein

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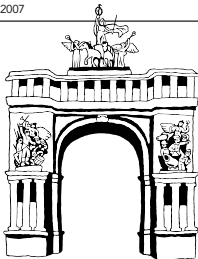
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THE stoop

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WINDSOR TERRACE, KENSINGTON

Bagless writer, tree-filled block

I made an Earth Day resolution: no more plastic shopping bags. When I go shopping, I will bring my own bag. If I forget my bag, I will ask for paper. Most stores have paper bags, they just don't think to offer them.

I didn't decide this because of that Assemblyman in Bensonhurst who wants to ban plastic bags because they're environmentally unsound. For me, the anti-plastic campaign began because I've gotten fed up with all the shopping bags that get stuck to the branches of the tree in front of my house. The other day, there was one just inches from my living-room window, but I couldn't reach it. So instead of a locust tree, I had a plastic bag tree.

I hate plastic bag trees. There are five of them on my block alone, and hundreds throughout the neighborhood. If the shopping bags don't end up in the trees, they end up in the water, floating for eternity and strangling marine life. The other place they end up is in the landfill, where they pile up. When they finally decompose, the bags return to their oil-based roots.

When I go down to Seventh Avenue, I usually make three or four stops: video rental store (small, black bag), Italian specialty store (large white bag, two if I am buying dinner), one of the markets (thin plastic bag, usually doubled), wine shop (black bag with tell-tale silver stripes). When I get the bags home I stuff them under my sink. Eventually, I have more than I need down there and I throw them all away, only to start my collection all over again.

Of course, the fault lies not only with the stores, but with myself. I already have three or four canvas bags — bags that I brought expressly for the purpose of cutting down my use of plastic shopping bags — yet I never seem to have one on me when I'm out shopping. If I am forgetting, the rest of Park Slope is probably forgetting, too.

If we can go bagless when we go to Costco, we can do it everywhere. But you have to remember that canvas bags (or those over-stuffable net bags that everyone uses at the Co-op) and if you must take a bag, re-use it.

There is no reason that we need those flimsy plastic shopping bags. Most of the grocery stores have the good old-fashioned paper bags, so use those instead (and make sure they get recycled, too). The bag that was in the tree outside my window is finally gone. The bag No. 47 of '07 ripped it out of the branches and sent it on its way, probably to another tree, or maybe all the way into the harbor. I am glad it is gone from my block, and I want to be sure that a bag I take is not the next one in my tree.

But what about the next bag? So let's all make this Earth Day resolution in Park Slope: "Refuse the bag!"

THE KITCHEN SINK

Five Slope restaurants have already signed onto our pal Lenore Aros's breast cancer fundraiser. As we reported a few weeks ago, Aros has been asking Slope restaurants to contribute towards fighting the disease. So far, **Blue Ribbon**, **Aunt Suzie's**, **Bogota Latin Bistro**, **Bonnie's Grill**, **NoNo Kitchen** and **Miriam** have agreed to donate 10 to 15 percent of one night's receipts. We'll do our part by continuing to print the names of the go-gooding eateries. For now, email Aros, a Lincoln Place resident, at walkingwithlenore@att.net. ... **Murray**, the newest **Muppet**, made his Sesame Street debut in **Prospect Park** this week. The filming, for next season, was at the bandshell and around the **Ninth Street playground**. Murray, a large orange Muppet, passed from his work to greet the crowds. His human pal, **Muppeteer Joey Mazzarino**, will entertain adults at **PS 107** "Readings on the Fourth Floor" series on June 5 at 7 pm. Email us at Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com

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PS ... I LOVE YOU

Nico Lalli

'Greening' of Park Slope

By Nica Lalli
The Brooklyn Paper

As Gordon Gekko might say nowadays: Green is good. The influx of condos is forcing developers to come up with new ways to move their units. The latest marketing tool? Go green.

At 515 Fifth Ave., a condominium at the corner of 13th Street that is still under construction, developers are already championing a structure being built out of environmentally safe materials. They tout eco-friendly features like roof plantings (not a roof garden, but a bona-fide "green roof") and two outdoor courtyards to add more trees and plants. They hand out a rendering that makes the building look positively luminous.

"We are committed to green as a business," said Joanna Frank, a co-partner in Bright City Development, the Slope-based real-estate company she founded with Aida Stoddard. The goal is to not only create family-sized units (the return of the long-lost three-bedroom apartment), but do it in an environmentally sensitive way.

"It's not just the business,



A new condo building at 515 Fifth Ave. promises to be "green."

though," Frank said. "But also the way we live our lives every day." Sustainability is the buzz

word today (besides "good school district" or "low maintenance"). It's achieved, Frank said, by lowering heating and cooling costs thanks to that green roof, buying energy-efficient appliances, using bathroom fixtures that conserve water, building cabinetry out of natural or untreated wood, recycled materials or renewable sources like bamboo.

"This is the future of building," said Stoddard, "and we have had an overwhelmingly positive response."

Fifty-eight people flocked to the building's open house on Sunday (Earth Day, in case you missed the connection). "Sales are hot," said William Hendrickson of Aguayo & Huebner, the real-estate company that is handling the condominium offering. "People really like the green [component] and the fact that the developers really thought about this building."

It looks like this green building will get the developers what they are also after: some green of their own.

Cash for badly slashed man

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

A Park Slope lawyer whose throat was slit during a 2004 car-jacking in his building's parking lot has won a multi-million-dollar settlement against the big-time construction company that failed to secure his safety.

Christopher Nesteruk sued the builders of his Sackett Street apartment — Alisa Construction, which is owned by the son-in-law of Brooklyn real-estate mogul Shaya Boyne/green — on the grounds that the company did not provide adequate security while construction was ongoing.

On Wednesday, a jury agreed, ruling that Alisa Construction was "100 percent" at fault.

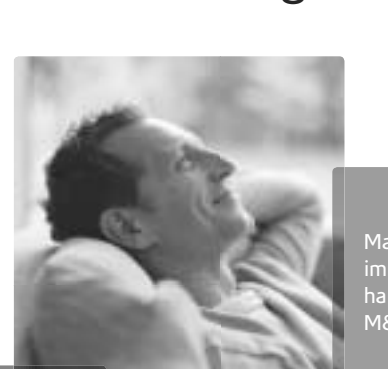
"There's a feeling of vindication and closure and justice," Nesteruk told The Brooklyn Paper after the verdict. "There's nothing that any court or jury can do to turn back the clock, but we do feel vindicated. And we're hoping that this will send a message to this general contractor, and that they'll think more about safety than their own profits."

Alisa Construction would not comment on the verdict. The central facts in the case are not in dispute: On June 16, 2004, Nesteruk walked into his building's parking lot and began to unlock his Audi when an assailant slit his throat and stabbed his arms and head.

The electric gate that had been installed to protect the driveway during construction had yet to be activated. Nesteruk sued Alisa Construction for failing to secure the site, basing his claim on a city law requiring contractors to provide round-the-clock security at construction sites. At issue was whether the building was under construction site, since the city had issued the developer a temporary certificate of occupancy.

Nesteruk has since recovered physically from the attack, but says he still suffers from severe post-traumatic stress syndrome. His attorney is serving a 22-1/2 year sentence.

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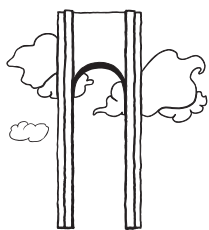
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THE stoop

BAY RIDGE-BENSONHURST DYKER HEIGHTS
BATH BEACH

Our local board is a hot ticket!

Who says that community board meetings are a bore? If people would only experience the excitement first hand, they'd see that the meetings are as entertaining as an episode of "American Idol!"

Take last week's Community Board 10 meeting. Where else can you be sitting and listening to a fairly routine debate about sidewalk cafe permits when all of a sudden someone gets up and starts screaming?

It started out innocently enough last Monday night at the Knights of Columbus meeting hall, when New York University professor Wade Goria's name came up on the list of people who wanted to speak during the public comment portion of the meeting.

For the uninitiated, public comment periods are the Ellis Island of democracy — a time when the great huddled masses, the wretched refuse, the homeless, the tempest-tossed, can breathe free and say whatever they feel. Those of us who cover community board meetings for a living have seen screaming matches, shoving matches and, in one notorious Lower East Side board meeting a few years ago, a riot by police officers (yes, we're still being deposed for civil suits).

So it's no wonder that Goria thought he could just get up to the mic and say what was on his mind. Unfortunately, he had chosen to attend a meeting on a night when the board was set to vote on a big zoning issue, so the turnout was better than usual (and, as usual, there was even free marble cake and coffee!). This may have played a role in what went down.

What went down? Goria went down.

As a historian, Goria said he wanted to address the much-discussed likelihood that the historic Bay Ridge United Methodist Church, "The Green Church," would indeed be sold and torn down to make way for condos.

YELLOW HOOKER



Matthew Lysiak



Human's-eye view

Some seagulls take a break from flying (and eating, among other things, garbage) to enjoy the cool breeze off the Narrows, as well as a spectacular view of the Verrazano Bridge — seen from the Shore Road Promenade.

Getting something to hum about

By Matthew Lysiak
The Brooklyn Paper

It's the end of April and that means only one thing in Bay Ridge: it's time for the return of the hummingbird.

The mysterious buzzing sound that kept half of Bay Ridge awake last year hasn't returned — yet — but mating season has only just begun.

Bay Ridge's close encounter of the frog kind started in April, 2005, when chiropractor Concetta Butera noticed "this awful noise."

The hum was so loud that some residents blamed passing trains, the Owls Head sewage treatment plant, and even UFOs — but the source of the sound remained a mystery by the time the hum fell silent that October.

Last April, the mysterious humming sound was back, and baffling residents anew.

As complaints mounted, local officials again attempted to discover the source. Owls Head was the most likely suspect — given the location and the sound itself — but the Department of Environmental Protection quickly ruled itself out after an investigation. Everyone was stumped.

Clearly, no one watches the Discovery Channel. In the early 1980s, a mysterious humming noise in a California town created a "Sleepless in Sausalito" situation — but, as the Discovery Channel reported, fish bi-

ologists eventually tracked the sound to male toadfish making a racket to find a mate.

The oyster toadfish has been described as "homely" for its large protruding eyes, broad mouth, and flesh-like whiskers surrounding a short snout. To attract a mate, it produces a vocalization that some liken to a "foghorn."

The toadfish's spawning season extends from April to October, which corresponds to the time when residents in Bay Ridge have reported hearing the mysterious noise. The male locates a private nesting area (often using old tin cans or decayed wood lying on the bay bottom (how romantic), and then calls out in his low, mournful "foghorn" to spawning females.

Reports of the toadfish mating season last year ignited a fish frenzy. "The toadfish is Bay Ridge's story of the century," said Community Board 10 District Manager Josephine Beckmann. "Fox News was even here."

Like most stories of the century, though it lasted about two weeks. But unlike annoyed residents with a festival on the third Tuesday of June, when the fish really begin mating.

"We had a big festival to honor the toadfish with people dressing up as that ugly fish and a big parade marching down the street back," said Sausalito Stan Barburich.

But, alas, interest died down and the festival stopped humming after just three years. Barburich described the sound as an "almost mechanical vibration hum, not like any animal you could imagine."

And the toadfish is virtually impossible to catch because it often buries itself in the mud during the day, and prefers to come out at night.

"No one ever sees them, and I never heard of anyone catching one," said Barburich.

Barburich said it would be a shame if Bay Ridge never had the opportunity to celebrate its humming fish.

"I highly recommend the festival," he said. "People really love something this different."

Councilman Vince Gentile (D-Bay Ridge) said he would support the idea, though the longtime Owls Head skeptic suggested that he wasn't convinced that the toadfish is the root of the local hum.

"If it is the toadfish, we think a festival would be a great idea," said a Gentile aide. "It would bring more of that small-town feel to our community."

The aide questioned whether Gentile would wear a toadfish costume.

ON OUR OTHER stoop

PAGES

PARK SLOPE

DUMBO

Recent looks?

C'GARDENS

Boat people

FT. GREENE

Too much green?

online at BrooklynPaper.com

passion even cowed Councilman Vince Gentile into submission. But that didn't matter to Goria.

"Pastor Emerick says that he is selling the church to be closer to Jesus," Goria started in. "But I don't think Jesus would want to see his house of worship be destroyed to line the pockets of corrupt church elders looking for a \$12-million payday."

But before Goria could go any further, he was interrupted by screams from the standing-room-only audience.

"He is out of order!" one woman shouted. "He is not allowed to say that."

Goria tried to speak again, but this time, CB10 chairman Dean Rasiway — a retired cop! — intervened on behalf of the growing chorus seeking to end the professor's lecture early.

"You are out of order," Rasiway said, giving Goria the stare-down. Undeterred by the warning, Goria looked back down at his two pages of notes and continued where he left off about the church's supposed corruption.

"Pastor Emerick was sent by the hierarchy to make sure this See **YELLOW** on page 8

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Drugged-out robber strikes in the Heights

By Lilo H. Stainton
The Brooklyn Paper

84th Precinct

The thief promised he meant no harm, but just needed enough money to buy drugs so he could stop the pain of withdrawal.

"Don't worry, I'm not going to hurt you," he said as he grabbed a 33-year-old woman on the corner of Orange and Henry streets, around 9 p.m. on April 16. "I just need something, I'm dope sick."

The woman handed over \$40 and the addict shuffled off. She described him as a white Hispanic man, age 22, with a goatee, 6-

foot-2 and 180 pounds, in a gray windbreaker, blue jeans, and a black hat. But she was not able to find him in the police's photo books.

Gunman strikes

A man who may have had a gun followed a woman into her Willow Street apartment and robbed her at 11:30 a.m. on April 16, police said.

The stranger followed the woman into her building, between Cranberry and Orange streets, trailed her upstairs and, when she started to enter her unit, told her he knew someone who lived there. She told him that was impossible, since she lives alone.

"Just give me \$20," the thief

then insisted. When she turned over the cash, the perp started to walk away, only to return and snatch her pocketbook, too.

"I'll shoot you," he said as he ran off.

The woman lost \$50, various credit cards and her driver's license. She described the robber as a 5-foot-9, 180-pound black man, with a goatee, a gray jacket, sweatpants and a black cap.

Ungrand hotel

Someone stole a laptop from a room at the Marriott Hotel on Adams Street on April 18, police said.

The victim, a 46-year-old South Carolina man, had left for the city around 10 a.m. When he

returned around 10:30 p.m., he found that someone had broken in and removed his Compaq laptop.

Other guests were interviewed, but the device — and the thief — have not been found. Kathleen Duffy, a Marriott spokeswoman, said the hotel investigated his claim by interviewing staff and checking the electronic door key for other entries. None were found, so managers referred the case to the corporate office in Maryland.

They run an extremely tight ship there," Duffy said, noting the hotel had won top awards in the chain for several years.

Fake cop

A 16-year-old lost his phone to a man who claimed to be a cop who needed to make a call on April 20, police said.

The teen was walking home around 5:30 p.m. when the impersonator stopped him on the corner of Bergen and Hoyt streets. The man asked to use his phone, and the "officer" made several personal calls before running off with the Motorola Razz.

Eagle eye rob

A thief snatched the eyeglasses off a 63-year-old woman on Atlantic Avenue, but she got a good look at the robber anyway.

Police said the man ran up behind his elderly victim as she neared Hoyt Street, around 9:30 a.m. on April 11. She described him to police as a black man, 6-foot-1 and 200 pounds, wearing a beige overcoat, white sneakers, a gray military cap and blue jewelry.

Toothless crime

A man pretending to ask for the time actually robbed a woman of her bag full of personal possessions — including a \$1,600 set of dentures.

The thief stopped the woman around noon on April 20 on Livingston Street, near Smith Street. He asked for the time then grabbed her watch and purse. The bag held no money, but it did have her wallet, glasses, makeup and dentistry.

Unholy heist

The thief clearly didn't come for redemption.

Someone stole a purse an early learning center at a Monroe Street church on April 18. The 29-year-old victim left her handbag inside the school office, off Pierrepont Street, at 8 a.m. When she returned two hours later, the \$150 purse, with a new cell phone, credit cards, her paycheck and \$5 inside, had disappeared.

Cars clipped

At least two cars were reported stolen in the Brooklyn Heights area last week, including one that disappeared from a Love Lane garage.

Sometime between 10 p.m. on April 14 and 10:30 a.m. on April 17, a woman's Toyota SUV went missing from the garage on Love Lane, off Willoughby Street. Her

46-year-old husband dropped it off, but when he went to find the car several days later, it was gone.

Between 7:30 p.m. on April 15 and 5:30 p.m. on April 17, a Connecticut woman lost her Jeep Liberty to thieves. The 2004 SUV was parked on the north-west corner of Hicks and Poplar

streets, but disappeared without a trace.

Stealing home

Someone swiped a Yankees jacket and bag full of electronics from a bench in Tillary Park while the owner played ball nearby, police said.

The 37-year-old victim arrived at the park, on Jay and Tillary streets, around 10 p.m.

She and her friends were playing ball a bit too far away from the bench where she had laid her stuff.

When she returned, nearly two hours later, her prized jacket and a bag with \$550 in games, phones, watches, and bowling patches were gone.

76th Precinct

Speechless

A woman who was brutally robbed on her way to the gym early on April 11 was too scared to leave her home — or call cops — for nearly a week, police said.

The 57-year-old Sackett Street resident suffered multiple wounds on her face and lips, plus bruises on her hips, when she was attacked by two thugs at 6:20 a.m., near the corner of Court and Sackett streets. She was heading to the gym one block away.

The robbers managed to grab \$175 from the victim before running off.

Elder attacked

Sometimes age trumps brawn.

That may have been the case on April 21, when a man tried to steal the necklace and cash from a 79-year-old man as he walked home on Baltic Street, near Hicks Street, at around 11:15 a.m.

A would-be thief approached and tried to convince the senior to turn over his valuables, but the older fellow declined. Even when the perp pulled out a knife, the gent didn't give in. Eventually the attacker fled empty handed.

Baltic stabbing

A man making his way home the night of April 14 was attacked by two thugs who stabbed

him many times and stole his hat and cash, police said.

The 33-year-old victim was stabbed repeatedly in the back, stomach and left leg before the robbers ran off with his designer lid and \$100.

The victim, who landed in Lutheran Medical Center, had no recollection of his attackers.

Trucker target

A man resting in his truck lost a cellphone to a thug who threatened to cut his tires in Red Hook on April 18, police said.

The 40-year-old trucker had parked at the corner of Court and Bush streets when a thief came along just before 5:30 a.m.

"I'll cut your tires," the man said, menacing a screwdriver. "I need medicine."

The thief snatched the driver's cellphone and ran off.

Thief captured

A rookie cop at the 76th Precinct chased down and arrested a man who stole a woman's bag of clothing on April 19.

Officer Dnyed Powell was patrolling Hoyt Street, near Douglas Street, at just before 9 a.m. when a woman ran up and said she had been robbed.

Powell took off down Douglas Street, captured the 52-year-old thief and collected the clothing, valued at \$64.

The thief now faces grand larceny charges.

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Monica cremated as cops hunt killer

The Brooklyn Paper

An overflow crowd gathered at a Kew Gardens funeral home on Sunday to remember Monica Henk, the tattoo artist who was slain by a hit-and-run driver in Clinton Hill and died a few days later.

Henk had been left brain-dead after the April 7 accident and died the next week. She was cremated and her ashes will be taken to her native Colombia, where they will be scattered in the wind, her husband, Dan Henk told The Brooklyn Paper.

"Everybody was really, really sad. She had a tremendous impact on so many people," Henk recalled.

Family and friends have now raised \$20,000 as a reward to help find Henk's killer. The police now consider it a criminal case, not just a motor-vehicle accident, Henk said.

Leads are pouring in, he added. A police spokesman would only confirm the investigation is continuing.

Monica Henk, who was riding a motorcycle on her way to class at the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music around 7 a.m., was run down by a black Chevy S-10 Blazer at the corner of Kent Street and Flushing Avenue. There were no witnesses, but police identified the make and model of the car by analyzing parts left in the road.

Security footage made available by several Hasidic businesses in the area also aided police in identifying the vehicle, Dan Henk said.

Henk asked that anyone with information call him directly at (917) 554-1341 or call the state CrimeStoppers hotline at (800) 577-TIPS.

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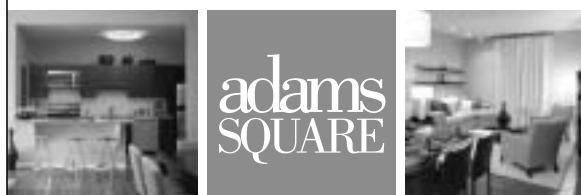
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Perp wanted a phone, but settled for cash

By Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

A gunman cornered a man on First Street and demanded his cellphone, but settled for taking his victim's cash when the man refused to give up the mobile device.

Cops said that the 27-year-old victim, who lives on First Street between Eighth Avenue and Prospect Park West, was walking home from the Q train at Flatbush Avenue at around 9:30 pm on April 18 when the gunman approached.

"Give me your phone," he said, showing off his black gun. The victim pleaded with the perp to allow him to keep his phone because he has a family. When the perp altered his demand to cash, the victim complied, turning over \$115.

That's when the thief, identified as a 5-foot-7 black man, ran away, heading northbound on Eighth Avenue.

More gunplay

Three men, one toting a black handgun, surrounded him as he walked home from a Flatbush Avenue supermarket on April

POLICE BLOTTER

22 and mugged him of \$50.

After the man turned down Eighth Avenue en route to his Berkeley Place home at around 4:30 pm, the gunman rushed him, pulled out the gun and said, "Give me what you got."

The other two men surrounded the victim until the 43-year-old victim coughed up the money. Police believe the trio followed the man from the su-

permarket and are scouring the surveillance tapes for evidence.

Ouch

Three thugs pummeled a Garfield Place man in front of his own building on April 18, but didn't take anything — anything material, that is — from their victim.

The beating began at around 10:30 pm as the man was re-

turning from a Seventh Avenue store to his building, which is between Fifth and Sixth avenues. The first thug attacked the man with a two-foot wooden stick, and then the other two men joined in, using their fists.

The man was taken to Lutheran Hospital. He told cops that he had had a "previous dispute" with the assailants. The wooden stick was recovered as evidence.

That was easy

A thief rushed into a Fourth Avenue office supply store, grabbed three cases of printer

cartridges and jumped into a waiting getaway car on April 20.

Police said the 5-foot-8 man entered the store at around 7:30 pm, grabbed \$1,100 worth of the high-end ink, and fled in a silver, four-door sedan with the license plate ACJ-2165.

Grand theft auto

At least three cars were stolen off Park Slope streets last week, police said. Here's a roundup:

• Sometime between April 15 and April 18, a 1997 Dodge disappeared from its spot in front of 400 Dean St. No bro-

ken glass was found at the scene, which is between Fourth and Fifth avenues.

• Sometime after 7 pm on April 19, a yellow 1997 van of unidentified make was taken from its spot on 12th Street between Second and Third avenues. In this case, there was broken glass everywhere.

• A 2004 BMW was taken from in front of an auto repair shop on 14th Street sometime

between 6 pm on April 20 and 9 am the next day. In this case, the victim told cops that he brought the car to the auto shop only to have the workers there call him the next morning to tell him that the car was missing from the shop, which is between Third and Fourth avenues.

The victim told cops that the car was worth \$45,000.

Hot restaurant

It's almost like the plot out of the book she was reading: A customer at a trendy Seventh Avenue restaurant enjoyed a nice dinner, but then realized that her bag — containing a dime-store novel — had been stolen from the back of her chair while she used the restroom.

The April 16 theft at the restaurant, which is between Lincoln and St. Johns places, resulted in the loss of the bag itself, plus a wallet, various cred-

it and debit cards, a legal pad (valued at \$4), and a paperback book titled "Manhattan Noir," according to the police report.

Got money?

A 54-year-old woman got the fright of her life at around 10 pm on April 15 when three men surrounded her and demanded money as she walked on Seventh Avenue.

After the woman, who lives on Sixth Avenue, said she didn't have any money, one of the thugs pushed her up against a fence near the corner of St. Johns Place. When she started screaming, the thugs ran off.

Just beat it

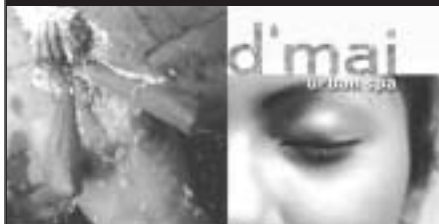
It appears that a frustrated baseball player is on the loose in Park Slope.

Two incidents involving an attack with a bat-like object caused minor bumps and bruises on two teenagers just 10 minutes apart on Fifth Avenue.

In the first attack, a 17-year-old was pummeled near the corner of Fifth Street just after 3 pm. He told cops he has no idea why he got hit and that he didn't see what hit him — or the person who did it.

A few minutes later, a 15-year-old was at the same corner talking to some friends when a resulted in the loss of the bag itself, plus a wallet, various cred-

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B'klyn boat people

One couple's hangout on the Gowanus canal

By Ariella Cohen
The Brooklyn Paper

Behind a locked gate at the end of a dead-end street, a tiny community of houseboats is growing on the banks of Lavender Lake. Its owners — four people on three boats — believe that their watery ways could help New York in its quest for sustainability.

"You can't ignore how much waste you are creating when you have to carry it onto land yourself," said Sasha Porter, who owns a former World War II rescue boat and her partner Megan Hesselenthaler call "Eco-Ark."

They don't technically live on the floating one-bedroom — most recently home to the Empty Vessel Project art collective — which sits between Union and Carroll streets. But they do spend a lot of time there, almost entirely off the grid. They have a circa-1924 icebox, a small electricity generator and a wood-burning stove they imported from a friend's cabin in Maine. They have no running water.

Their toilet consists of a beige, plastic seat and a sawdust-filled bucket.

Each time one waste bucket fills up, Porter and Hesselenthaler move it to a small closet in the head of the boat and eventually, cart it away. Soon, the pair plans to begin composting the sawdust-coated poop and using it as soil for a flower garden.

"When you compost human waste, it loses 90 percent of its mass," Porter said, sitting in a deck chair on the rear helm of the boat and looking out as her backyard shimmered alongside the boat (is that a rainbow or an oil slick? Tough to say along the Gowanus).

The composting plan is just one of the duo's many green dreams for Eco-Ark.

Recently, they also began to work on designs for a solar-powered freezer and a water-conserving device that would catch rain in a roof basin made of old umbrellas.

"We want to be a lab for sustainable design," said Porter, a 26-year-old cabinet-maker.

Including the cost of their

limited utilities, Porter said she and Hesselenthaler pay about as much for their Gowanus hideaway as they did in their old digs in Williamsburg.

While the legality of the floating one-bedroom is about as murky as the canal itself, Porter and Hesselenthaler are hoping that city officials will someday allow them to get permits to actually live on the boat.

By doing so, they say, they can serve as a model for affordable, eco-friendly housing in a space-strained city.

Of course, that's the long-term plan. In the short term, the couple will have to lift anchor this summer, when the city turns off the turbine that brings fresh water into the canal.



Ahoy, mates! Megan Hesselenthaler (right) and Sasha Porter relax on a houseboat that is berthed along the Gowanus Canal.

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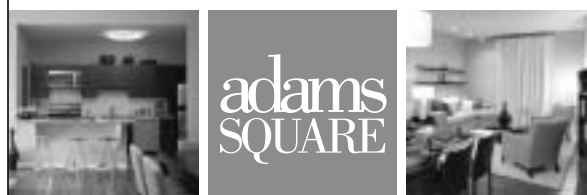
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Pol: Bloomy's plan is not 'ferry' good

By Matthew Lysiak
The Brooklyn Paper

Commuters in Bay Ridge who want a 12-minute water taxi ride into Manhattan have been left at the dock — and they have Mayor Bloomberg to blame, a local pol charged this week.

Just hours after the mayor gave his much-lauded "Greener, Greater New York" speech on Sunday, Councilman Vince Gentile (D-Bay Ridge) fired back saying that the Bloomberg administration is ignoring a very simple, low-pollution mass transit alternative for Bay Ridge.

"The Mayor proposed an ambitious plan on Earth Day, but for some incomprehensible reason, did not act on a plan that would ease the notoriously traffic and lead to cleaner air across Brooklyn," said Gentile.

Earlier this year, Gentile and Councilman David Yassky (D-Brooklyn Heights) secured \$500,000 to transform the 69th Street pier into a ferry-ready dock. But the Department of Transportation has not spent the money to do the job — and that makes the green-minded Gentile see red.

"The Transportation Commissioner made it very clear to us that they are not interested in the ferry service [from Bay Ridge]," said Gentile.

Even a Republican joined the Democratic councilman's call for more ferry service.

"Ferry service from 69th Street would help improve the daily commute for countless local residents," said Rep. Vito Fossella (R-Bay Ridge).

It's not as if Bay Ridge lacks a ferry tradition. Before the Verazano Narrows Bridge opened in 1964, passengers regularly cruised to Staten Island. Many believed that the bridge obviated the need for new service — but new residents are reconsidering.

"It would absolutely be a nice thing for this community," said local activist Peter Killen. "People are always looking for alternative routes of transportation."

Killen was involved in the last attempted resurrection of the pier in 2000, but says he was also

shot down by the DOT.

New York Water Taxi, the company that operates "taxi" boats all over the city, is warm to the idea of running boats out of the Bay Ridge.

"We would certainly consider

the possibility," said company rep Robert Pandolfo. "It isn't too complicated. All the terminal

would need is a bumper system and a ramp built into the dock."

The DOT did not return several requests for a comment,

leaving others to wonder if the mayor green rhetoric was just Earth Day hot air.

"The opportunities have been there, and the city has steadfastly refused to take them," Gentile fumed.

Move your asphalt! Paving plan released

The Brooklyn Paper

Twenty-two local roads from Bay Ridge to Bensonhurst will be getting a well-deserved makeover this summer — a tiny fraction of the thoroughfares that deserve the spring cleaning, at least one local official said.

Commuters will get a smoother ride, of course, but only after enduring a few bumpy weeks of construction.

Josephine Beckmann, the district manager of Community Board 10 in Bay Ridge, said she was pleased by the list, but wanted more roads in her neighborhood to get the pampered treatment.

"Overall, I am very happy," she said. "The roads that need it most are going to get the attention, but there is a lot of work that still needs to be done."

She said the neighborhood got about one-third of what it requested. Specifically, a stretch of 65th Street was left off the list.

"The Department [of Transportation] has its own way of evaluating needs, and you never get everything you ask for," the ever-cheery Beckmann said.

The work at each site should take no longer than two weeks from beginning to end, according to Beckmann.

Of course, it doesn't take two weeks to pave a street. First, the top layer of asphalt is removed in a process called "milling." Then (and here's the part that drives drivers nuts), the Department of Transportation leaves the bumpy road surface unpaved for a week so that utility companies can make sure nothing has been damaged. If DOT gets the go-ahead, the road is resurfaced with fresh sticky asphalt, which takes an additional day or two.

Local drivers say they will trade the two weeks of inconvenience for a smoother ride down the road.

"Some of the roads can do a number on your car," said Bensonhurst resident Alex Maur. "I think the work is long overdue."

The Department of Transportation said all paving should be completed by July 1, but added that individual sites could be rescheduled. The agency would not comment about Beckmann's request for far more street repavings.

— Matthew Lysiak

The following locations are scheduled for paving. Locations with an asterisk (*) are scheduled to be paved beginning next week:

Community Board 10 (Bay Ridge-Dyker Heights):
Narrows Avenue from 68th-69th streets
Colonial Road from 81st-92nd streets
Wakeman Place from Colonial Road-Third Avenue
Harbour View Terrace from 80th-82nd streets
Marine Avenue from 92nd Street-Ft. Hamilton Parkway
71st Street from Shore Road-10th Avenue
10th Avenue from 77th-86th streets
85th Street from Shore Road-14th Avenue

Community Board 11 (Bensonhurst):
West 13th Street from Avenue P-Highway Avenue
Shore Parkway from 19th-21st avenues
21st Avenue from 86th Street-Shore Parkway*
21st Drive from Bay 25th Street-21st Avenue*
20th Lane from 21st Drive-20th Avenue
Benson Avenue from 14th-Stillwell avenues*
Rutherford Place from 17th-18th avenues*
Bay 29th Street from 86th Street-Cropper Avenue*
Avenue O from Bay Parkway-65th Street
24th Avenue from 65th Street-Avenue O
West Third Street from 65th Street-24th Avenue
West 11th Street from 71st Street-Avenue O
Bath Avenue from 14th-Stillwell avenues*
Avenue U from Stillwell-McDonald avenues

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HEALTH, MIND & BODY

MMC fights congestive heart failure

Maimonides Medical Center

More than five million Americans have congestive heart failure (CHF), which is the leading cause of hospitalization in this country.

All too often, patients with CHF are unable to follow self-care regimens when they return home, necessitating visits to the emergency room when their illness becomes acute yet again. Now, the CHF Program at the Maimonides Cardiac Institute is setting a new standard of care for these chronically ill patients.

CHF occurs when the heart muscle has been weakened and does not pump blood as well as it should to meet the needs of the body.

This can cause fluid build-up in the lungs and elsewhere. Common causes of CHF include heart attack, high blood pressure, valvular disease and infection.

The Maimonides CHF Program was created to provide a new approach to the treatment of CHF that focuses on keeping patients healthier and out of the hospital.

"The good news is that with prompt and appropriate treatment, many CHF patients can lead healthier lives and avoid the pattern of constant visits to the emergency room," said Dr. Norbert Moskowitz, Director of the Congestive Heart Failure Program. "We've established a treatment pro-

gram at Maimonides that has changed the lives of our patients — for the better."

The CHF team consists of a physician, nurse practitioners and registered nurses. Together, they assess a patient's cardiac needs and create an individualized plan of care. The program offers the latest in CHF treatment modalities, including current medical strategies, medications and advanced technologies, to help manage the disease. Each patient and caregiver is educated on how to manage CHF at home and prevent unnecessary hospitalizations.

Dr. Moskowitz believes that the key to the Program's success is that care does not end when a patient is discharged. Nursing team members follow-up regularly to ensure that patients are taking their medications and keeping their physician appointments. And patients get information on important topics such as medication management, special diets and fluid restrictions, and exercise during monthly support groups.

"There are a number of effective medications, surgical procedures and devices to assist the CHF patient's heart, but we believe that conventional care is overly dependent on crisis intervention and emergency hospitalization," said Dr. Gerald Hollander, Director of the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit. "We work with patients and their families to better manage CHF so

that it does not become an emergency. Our goal is to see our patients return to a better quality of life."

Numerous independent outside organizations have evaluated cardiac services across the US, and have invariably cited the Maimonides Cardiac Institute and the Congestive Heart Failure Program for excellence. The accolades include:

- Ranked No. 1 in New York State for Cardiology Services by HealthGrades

- Ranked best in New York City for patient outcomes in Interventional Cardiology by the NYS Department of Health

- Awarded Excellence in Cardiac Services by HealthGrades

- Designated Best Congestive Heart Failure Program in Northeast by Money Magazine

- Honor Roll of the Alliance for Quality Health Care and the Niagara Health Quality Coalition for Congestive Heart Failure and Interventional Cardiology

- Five-Star rated by HealthGrades in treatment of Heart Attacks, Congestive Heart Failure and Atrial Fibrillation

To learn more about the Congestive Heart Failure Program, log-on to www.maimonidesmed.org/cardiac or call the Cardiac Institute at (800) 682-5555.



Nursing care makes the difference in the Congestive Heart Failure Program at Maimonides Medical Center. In-hospital care includes dietary and lifestyle education and support for caregivers. When patients are home, specially trained RNs follow-up regularly to ensure that they stay out of the hospital as much as possible.

Fidelis Care events highlight push to cover uninsured throughout NYC

Fidelis Care

Fidelis Care is supporting the national Cover the Uninsured Week initiative, April 23-29, and plans to blanket New York City's five boroughs with representatives at more than 50 sites.

The Fidelis staffers will reach out to the 1.7 million children and adults in the city who are living each day without any form of health insurance.

Recently, Governor Eliot Spitzer addressed the importance of healthcare coverage for children and families in New York State.

"More than 3.1 million New Yorkers who lack health insurance will receive much needed attention here in New York and across the country with the designation of Cover the Uninsured Week," Gov. Spitzer said. "We should seize this opportunity to work on providing these New Yorkers... access to affordable, high quality medical care."

With a mission to serve the uninsured in medically underserved in New York State, Fidelis Care provides local residents with greater access to quality healthcare during Cover the Uninsured Week, the following week and until everyone in the state has the affordable, quality healthcare coverage they need and deserve.

Fidelis Care representatives will be at Brooklyn locations at the following times:

Friday, April 27, 12:30 to 5 pm: Coney Island Child Care Center, 2753 West 31st Street and Neptune Avenue.

Monday, April 30, 10:30 am to 3 pm: Janlian Medical Center, Lobby, 1508 Avenue U.

Tuesday, May 1, and Thursday, May 3, 10 am to 5:30 pm: Fidelis Care Office, 5704 8th Ave.

Wednesday, May 2, 10:30 am to 4 pm: Janlian Medical Center, Lobby, 833 5th St.

Friday, May 4, 10 am to 4 pm: Chang's Family Medical Center, 5303 8th Ave.

Saturday, May 5, 10:30 am to 4 pm: Seventh Avenue Medical Center, 5517 7th Ave.

Fidelis Care serves more than 260,000 people in 36 counties across New York State. Through the Child Health Plus, Family Health Plus, and Medicaid programs, Fidelis Care members are covered for regular checkups, preventive care, hospital and emergency care, prescription drugs, immunizations, eye exams, dental care, and more.

Fidelis Care also offers a Medicare Advantage program to New Yorkers in 22 counties including the 5 boroughs of New York and Long Island. Fidelis Care members have access to a provider network exceeding 29,000 healthcare professionals statewide. Regional offices are located in Rego Park (Queens), Albany, Syracuse and Buffalo.

For more information about Fidelis Care, call toll free: 888-FIDELIS (888-343-3547)

LMC dedicates diagnostic cardiology ctr

Lutheran Medical Center

Lutheran Medical Center held a dedication ceremony this week for its state-of-the-art cardiac catheterization suite.

The May Ellen and Gerald Ritter Diagnostic Cardiology Center, with heart related hospitalizations and death rates at alarming levels, the cardiac suite will allow Lutheran experts to detect heart disease and to recommend life-saving treatment options for Brooklyn's high risk patients.

Recognizing the need for a new cath lab in Brooklyn, the initiative to bring the service to Lutheran Medical Center re-

ceived broad support among community-based organizations and New York State and Brooklyn elected officials. Among the area's most passionate supporters was the May Ellen and Gerald Ritter Foundation and their donation of \$1 million. The foundation, led by Vincent Rohan, is a private non-operating foundation established to provide funding for public charities in the Greater New York area as well as those out-of-state.

"We are proud to support Lutheran Medical Center in their quest to provide first rate cardiac diagnostics to southwest Brooklyn communities," said Vincent Rohan, president

of the May Ellen and Gerald Ritter Foundation.

"With cardiac issues so prevalent in our communities, it was an easy decision to support the construction of the cardiac suite at Lutheran. Even if only one life is saved, the cost is well worth it."

According to the 2006 N.Y.C. Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's community health profile, the heart disease death rate is higher in southwest Brooklyn (Bay Ridge, Bensonhurst, and Dyker Heights) than anywhere else in the city. In Sunset Park, the heart disease hospitalization rate is slightly higher than in N.Y.C. overall. Cardiac catheterization

services will significantly help to reduce these statistics.

"Cardiac catheterization is a specialized diagnostic procedure used to evaluate the structure and function of the heart," said Robert Zaloom, M.D., Lutheran Medical Center cardiologist and director of the May Ellen and Gerald Ritter Diagnostic Cardiology Center. During catheterization, a thin flexible tube (catheter) is guided through blood vessels to the heart with little or no discomfort to the patient.

The procedure produces extremely high quality images, or angiograms, of the heart and coronary arteries allowing cardi-

ologists to clearly identify lesions, blockages, clots and other life-threatening abnormalities," he added.

Additionally, Lutheran Medical Center coordinates cardiovascular efforts closely with Lenox Hill Hospital, home to the Lenox Hill Heart and Vascular Institute of New York — among the leading cardiovascular care programs in the nation. Both hospitals formed a partnership specifically to develop an integrated cardiovascular services program located in Brooklyn.

A Level I Trauma Center and Stroke Center, Lutheran Medical Center (LMC) has cared for Brooklyn communities since

1883. As a full service 476-bed teaching hospital, LMC is the hub of Lutheran HealthCare, a network of primary, acute and long-term care centers in southwest Brooklyn.

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An artist's rendering of the proposed performing arts library.

Kiss their glass! Library still in trouble

By Ariella Cohen
The Brooklyn Paper

Brooklyn Public Library officials reportedly said this week that their efforts to raise money for an iconic, \$135-million glass-walled performing arts branch have failed — and that the project can't go forward at this point.

Chain's New York Business reported that a "library insider" made it clear that "the project will be saved only if a partner comes along to finance the building."

Readers of The Brooklyn Paper are well aware of the library's ongoing inability to get donors jazzed up over the Enrique Norten-designed Visual and Performing Arts Library, a bow-shaped structure that would be built on a city-owned triangle bounded by Flatbush Avenue, St. Felix Street and Lafayette Avenue.

But this is the first time that the library has publicly stated that the project cannot be done without a private partner.

"We don't have the funding right now and are looking [to other organi-

zations]," said library spokeswoman Stefanie Arck.

The arts library is a main feature of the city's plan to surround the Brooklyn Academy of Music with a Lincoln Center-style campus that includes new housing and cultural institutions.

Arck said that the BPL would consider sharing the Fort Greene lot with a partner.

"We are open to considering all kinds of partnerships at this point," she said.

Last year, The Brooklyn Paper re-

ported that library trustees approached developer Bruce Ratner, a longtime BAM trustee, about funding the facility, which would be located just a few blocks from his \$4-billion Atlantic Yards mega-project.

But those talks apparently went nowhere.

When the library design was unveiled in 2002, officials predicted the building would cost \$75 million and open in 2005. Last year, the price tag ballooned to \$135 million, and groundbreaking was pushed back to 2009.

The call for partners has again put that groundbreaking on hold — but Arck emphasized that the library has not "scrapped" the project.

Councilwoman Letitia James (D-Fort Greene) remains a critic of the project, no matter who is funding it. "There are many existing libraries that need air-conditioning, computers, more books and more staff to keep them open seven days a week," James said. "Until resources are given to make those improvements, we should not build a new library that will only serve the needs of a few."

BALL

Continued from page 1

ing an arena for the Brooklyn-bound New Jersey Nets by Opening Day in the fall of 2009. Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn spokesman Daniel Goldstein said Ratner's decision to move ahead with the demolition was "deeply troubling."



Councilwoman Tish James at Monday's rally.

"It has yet to be shown that [Ratner's] Atlantic Yards project passes legal muster," said Goldstein, whose group is one of 26 plaintiffs in a case that charges the state's environmental review of the project was incomplete, and must be redone.

"The demolitions are an affront to the community the developer purports to benefit," Goldstein added.

Councilwoman James and others are convening a community planning session this Saturday at the Hanson Place United Methodist Church to devise a new alternative to Atlantic Yards. Such a "charrette" session in 2004 created an alternative to Ratner's Atlantic Yards, but that so-called "Unity" plan was rejected by state officials in what critics say was a rigged process that greased the wheels for Ratner.

"We'll have to live with this development for years to come, so it should reflect our values, not the values of a developer with friends in high places," James said.

A Ratner spokesman, Loren Riegelhaupt, responded to an e-mail request for comment from The Brooklyn Paper. His response? "We have no comment on the lawsuit or the demolition," Riegelhaupt wrote.

BEES

Continued from page 1

will follow in four years." So start spreading the news: The end is near! (Just don't spread it with a cellphone.)

"Something is happening to the number of bee hives in New York — and studies have shown that bees get disoriented from cellphones," said Timothy McCabe, the curator of Entomology at the New York State Museum.

A study found that bees refuse to return to their hives when mobile phones are placed nearby, though it's unclear what happens when the phone or the tower is a bit further away, said McCabe.

"The study shows that if you put the phone very close to the hive it affects their ability to communicate," McCabe said. "But the effect on the bees still needs further study in terms of greater distances from the cellphones."

Graves, whose rooftop bees are especially vulnerable due to their high location and close proximity to cell phone towers, believes the theory may be more than just buzz.

"Bees are very sensitive with their direction, if you move a hive just three feet away, the bees get confused and hover in the spot where the hive used to be for hours," Graves said. "I believe that these towers are messing up my bees."

Today, there are approximately 10.5 million wireless phone subscribers in New York City, and thousands of cell-phone antennae throughout the boroughs, although there has been no way of accurately measuring the amount of radiation or the effect, if any, it is having on the bees ability to bumble.

In March, 2005, the City Council, citing health concerns, required the city to maintain a list of the locations of cellular phone antennae.

But it may not be so easy to save the bees. Even the beekeeper admitted that he's part of the problem.

"I do have a cellphone," Graves admitted. "But I feel so guilty every time I use it that I may just get rid of it."

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- 6/21 **Home Plate Stone** ^B presented by KeySpan
- 6/23 **Piggy Bank** ^C presented by New York's 529 College Savings Direct Plan
- 6/24 1957 Night - Joe Pignatano & Danny McDevitt Appearance
- 6/25 **Tailgate Chair** ^B presented by Lutheran Medical Center - Faith Night
- 6/26 **Jersey Backpack** ^B presented by Dime Savings Bank - Pay Your Weight Night
- 6/27 **Schedule Pen** ^B presented by SUNY Downstate Medical Center - Lucky Hot Dog Night
- 7/5 Latino Heritage Night presented by Maimonides Medical Center - Appearance by Reggy
- 7/7 **Souvenir Baseball** ^B
- 7/8 Ralph Branca Appearance - Game presented by HBO
- 7/9 **Green T-Shirt** ^D and Irish Heritage Night presented by Budweiser and WFAN
- 7/17 **Baseball Cap** ^B presented by Long Island University - Appearance by The ZOOperstars
- 7/18 **Scrubs** ^B presented by Maimonides Medical Center
- 7/19 **Thunderstix** ^B presented by Nutrament - Brooklyn's Got Talent
- 7/20 Fireworks - FDNY Night - Game presented by Parenting Magazine
- 7/21 Classic Car Show
- 7/22 **Don Newcombe Bobblehead** ^B and Appearance - Autism Awareness Night
- 7/27 Fireworks
- 7/29 **28" Wooden Bat** ^C - Jewish Heritage Night
- 8/5 **Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz Bobblehead** ^B
- 8/6 Camp Day - 12 noon First Pitch
- 8/10 Fireworks - Principal Financial Group Family Fun Fest
- 8/11 **Comic Coloring Book** ^C - Super Hero Night
- 8/12 **Ebbets Field Model** ^D - Photo Day - Soccer Night
- 8/16 **Willie Randolph Bobblehead** ^B presented by Atlantis Health Plan
- 8/17 **T-Shirt** ^B and EMS Night presented by Midwood Ambulance - Fireworks - Appearance by Rally
- 8/20 **Lee Mazzilli Bobblehead** ^B and Italian Heritage Night
Presented by Ridgewood Savings Bank and SportsNet New York
- 8/22 **Beer Glass** ^D presented by Miller Brewing Company - Military Night
- 8/23 Bark in the Park - Medieval Times Night
- 8/24 Fireworks - Biker Night
- 8/28 **Replica Jersey** ^B presented by Gargiulo's Restaurant - Pay Your Weight Night II
- 9/1 **Fleece Blanket** ^C
- 9/3 **Garage Sale Giveaway** ^B presented by New York's 529 College Savings Direct Plan
- 9/5 Breast Cancer Awareness Night
- 9/7 **Brooklyn Bridge Bobblehead** ^B presented by KeySpan - Fireworks - Appearance by BirdZerk!

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Fashion thievinistas find a Gap in store's security

By Matthew Lysiak and Michael Giardina
The Brooklyn Paper

68th Precinct

A popular Fifth Avenue clothing store's display table was looted by thieves who pulled off a bold high-noon heist on April 11. A 25-year-old employee said he'd noticed the shirts and sweaters in the store's window display table when he opened the store at 9:30 am only to check back shortly after noon that day to discover the table had been cleaned bare.

The perp made off with 20 shirts and 25 slit neck sweaters, worth a total of \$1,800. Unfortunately, police said employees at the store, which is near 86th Street, didn't notice the missing merchandise quickly enough to give them a good shot at finding the fashion thievinistas.

Backstabber

A 17-year-old woman had her purse and cash stolen at knifepoint by a thug who sneaked up from behind her on April 16.

The assault came at 11:20 pm as the young woman was enjoying a walk near Fourth

Avenue and 74th Street. After the victim felt the knife, she quickly let the perp have her purse, which held \$20.

She didn't get a good look at the armed bandit, cops said.

Missing cycle

A woman's motorcycle was stolen on April 16.

The 33-year-old victim had parked her 2005 Honda near Fort Hamilton Parkway at around 2:30 pm. When she returned an hour later, the bike, valued at \$9,071, was gone.

Club crawler

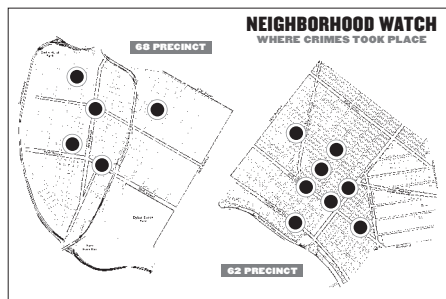
A man entered a nightclub by making his own entrance on April 17.

The 42-year-old owner locked up the Third Avenue club, which is near 71st Street, but returned at 6 am to find the lock on the sidewalk cellar door busted.

It appears that the thief, after getting past the first barrier, had kicked through the cellar's sheetrock wall to create a hole through which he crawled.

Police said he ransacked the office before making off with \$1,000, a \$1,100 flat-screen television, and 375 compact discs.

A security camera may have caught the perp in the act, but



the crook stole the tape from the camera, too.

Salon nailed

An 82nd Street nail salon was broken into and robbed on April 18.

The 34-year-old owner told cops that she had locked up the salon, which is at Third Avenue, but when she returned at 9:30

the next morning, she discovered that someone had crawled through her back window to remove \$900 and a high-definition television, valued at \$2,500.

The police are interviewing the neighbors.

62nd Precinct

AM break-in

A man returned to his 78th Street apartment on April 23 to find his bedroom window open and his cash missing.

The break-in occurred at around 9:30 am, when the thieves slipped through a back window and stole more than \$3,000, police said. The perps fled the apartment, which is near 16th Avenue, before the man returned.

Unfortunately, no one got a good look at the criminals.

Bath burg

Thieves squeezed through the bedroom window at a Bath Avenue apartment on April 20 to steal thousands of dollars in electronics, police said.

The 30-year-old resident of the apartment, which is near Bay 20th Street, came home at around 4 pm to discover the robbery. He lost \$3,800 in electronics and jewelry, he told cops.

Culinary creeps

Sure, the thieves stole jewelry — but they also got her cookbooks!

The recipes were so prized by the resident of 80th Street that she made sure to tell cops about their theft from her apartment on April 14.

The thieves also got away with gold bangles in the 7:30 am heist of the apartment, which is near Bay Parkway.

Singing blues

A middle-aged man watched in horror as his 2007 blue Suzuki motorcycle was loaded onto a white van and stolen.

The brand-new bike, valued at \$10,000, was lifted — quite literally — on April 20. The chopper had been parked on 85th Street, near 21st Avenue, when an unidentified white van pulled up, and a couple of thieves loaded it into the van.

police said.

The perps fled down 85th Street. Cops are looking for the bike, which has the New York license plate 83PT02.

Gym swipes

Two 86th Street gyms are competing for the title of Bensonhurst's most theft-prone gym, which is currently being held by a Shore Parkway workout space well known to the readers of this page.

On April 16, a member of a 24th Avenue gym placed his jacket, which contained his wallet, inside a locker — but forgot to lock it. He returned at around 10 pm, and found his property missing, police said.

On April 23, a member of a gym near 19th Avenue had his locker broken into at around 6 pm. The thieves took his clothes, plus credit and debit cards, police said.

In both thefts, there were no witnesses.

Bandit nabbed

A woman had her pocketbook swiped on April 23, only to have it returned by police after they caught the thug.

The woman was on 19th Avenue and 83rd Street, at around 6:30 am, when a perp came from behind and snatched her purse, police said. Later, police caught their suspect, a 19-year-old, with the accessory on Benson Avenue.

It's unclear what was in the bag, but the thug is facing a charge of grand larceny, which kicks in whenever more than \$999 is stolen.

Purse stolen

A woman walking on 71st Street and 19th Avenue had her purse snatched, but later got it back, albeit with the money missing.

The April 12 theft occurred at 2 pm, when a man took the purse and fled down 19th Avenue.

The victim later found the handbag, with \$400 missing; everything else was still there, police said.

Cops say they are looking for a 6-foot black man, who was last seen wearing a black sweatshirt and blue jeans.

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YELLOW...

Continued from page 3

sale went through,” Gorla tried again. Before he could finish his next sentence, Rasinya leapt out of his chair, and with one clean swipe, grabbed the microphone out of the historian's hand.

A stunned Gorla paused for a moment before exiting stage left, much to the approval of the cheering audience.

Gorla, who has taught International Relations for 18-years at NYU, later said he was hoping to deliver the message that the sale of the Green Church was “a corporate ruse” and church elders are money-hungry. He also wanted to say that the government should seize the church building and preserve it — but he never got the chance. Rasinya had delivered his own brand of justice.

One CB10 member said Gorla was censured because he committed a violation of the public comment rules.

“You can't just stand up there and say this or that about someone's religion,” the member said. “This isn't anarchy, and when he attacks a religion, it is the chairman's responsibility to maintain order, which is what Dean did.”

Gorla said he wasn't trying to insult anyone's religion, and that he should have had the right to speak about what he feels is a robbery of historic proportions.

“It was public comment session and my right of free speech was taken away,” said Gorla. “Now I know how Martin Luther felt.”

Men like Gorla don't show up at every meeting, but if you thought community boards were all about rezoning lectures, or 30-minute debates on whether or not to put a traffic light on 86th Street, you're going to miss out on some great action (and marble cake and coffee, too).

THE KITCHEN SINK

Our pal **Fran Garber** is at it again. The doyen behind Bay Ridge's **Regina Opera Company** begged us to “tell the world” that she's looking for an actor to fill a “non-singing, non-speaking” role in her upcoming production of Puccini's “Tosca.” Remember, would-be thespians, there are no small roles, even if there are small opera companies. Garber asked actors to email her at reginaper@aol.com. ... The **Najjar family** was well known in Tipical as being the Barker family of bakers. Now the clan is trying to live the American dream in Bay Ridge at **Sweet Treats**, their appropriately named shop on Fifth Avenue at 68th Street. ... Vampires in Bay Ridge? Aspiring screen writer **Anthony Capialli** sees dead people, and they gather in Owl's Head Park. Check out his short film, “Destiny's Child (Devil Watch Vampire),” for free on YouTube. It's set in Bay Ridge! ... Don't look now, but **state Sen. Marry Golden** (R-Bay Ridge) is keeping an open (and green) mind to the mayor's environmental plan. “Pollution and congestion are major issues that effect quality of life... and that they do need to be addressed to a degree,” he said through an aide. ... **Rep. Vito Fossella** (R-Bay Ridge) applauded the Supreme Court's ruling last week against a barely used abortion method. He added that he would oppose any effort by Congress to restore a woman's ability to choose such a procedure in consultation with her doctor. **Email Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com**



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The Brooklyn Paper's essential guide to the Borough of Kings

April 28, 2007

Making his 'Mark'

Morris takes Manhattan, makes debut at Metropolitan Opera

By Kevin Filipski
for The Brooklyn Paper

Mark Morris might be the best-known dancer in Brooklyn — his name is always in lights on the Lafayette Avenue building that houses his eponymous dance troupe — but when discussing his latest project, even this seasoned choreographer and director seems slightly nervous.

"What a giant organization the Met is!" the 50-year-old founder of the Mark Morris Dance Group exclaimed in an exclusive interview with GO Brooklyn. "That's the biggest pressure: it's so gigantic that they even have a department of departments!"

Morris was taking a rare day off from working on the premiere of his new staging of Christoph Willibald Gluck's Baroque opera, "Orfeo ed Euridice," opening on May 2 at the Metropolitan Opera. Morris's production, his Met debut, marks the first time in 50 years that a choreographer has directed a production at the famed opera house.

"Seriously, it's sometimes hard to know what's going on all the time," he said. "We're rehearsing in the third sub-basement of the Opera House, so there could be a nuclear event outside and you would never know that it happened."

But in a good way. "[The Met] is really an amazing sort of opera factory. I'm used to craziness when I'm staging and choreographing, but working at the Met really takes it to another level."

Morris's debut as both director and choreographer has been in the planning stages for a number of seasons, and has overcome difficulties that included last year's death of one of its stars, mezzo-soprano Lorraine Hunt Lieberson.

"I was asked by [Met artistic director and conductor] Jimmy Levine a couple of years ago to stage this opera," Morris said, "and originally it was me, Jimmy and Lorraine working together. Then a lot of things changed with Lorraine's death. After we lost her, [counterpoint] David Daniels replaced her as Orfeo, and luckily for me the notions that I had for that character didn't change at all."

Gluck's opera — which Morris has staged in different versions, first in 1988 and again in 1996 — is a retelling of the Greek myth of Orpheus, who journeys to the underworld to reclaim his beloved wife, Eurydice, after her death. There is, however, one condition: he must not look back at



Choreographer Mark Morris (left) is staging Christoph Willibald Gluck's Baroque opera, "Orfeo ed Euridice" (above) at the Metropolitan Opera.



her until they have returned to earth or he will lose her again — this time forever. "Orfeo" is filled with some of Gluck's greatest music, including several wonderful dance interludes.

As excited as Morris is to be at the helm, the Met is just as happy to have him.

Mark's debut at the Met is notable in many ways. Met General Manager Peter Gelb told GO Brooklyn, "It's the first time a choreographer has directed an opera in more than 50 years — but to label Mark Morris a 'choreographer' is to not fully understand the range of Mark as an artist or his approach to his work."

Living up to such high expectations, however, can be exhausting. "This is my last production of a very busy, very tiring year, and I've tried to make it lively and interesting so that it's not difficult to work on and perform it," Morris said.

"At least it's quite short — I think it's one of the few operas that's the right length," Morris added about the 90-minute show. "Also, I've tried to stage it very simply and, I hope, beautifully. It's a gorgeous story with gorgeous music for the solo singers, the chorus of 100 and the dancers."

Morris will be in his element with the dancers since "there's a great deal of dancing

in the piece. I have 22 dancers, and they play everybody in the work aside from the three leads; they dance in the diversifications, they dance in the many choruses, and they're doing the same thing as the chorus throughout the opera. The dancers are both the friends [of Orfeo and Euridice] and the Furies."

Although his collaborators, set designer Allen Moyer and costume designer Isaac Mizrahi, are also making their Met debuts, Morris has had long professional relationships with both men.

Mizrahi, despite his own celebrity, has no problem following Morris's lead. "I think we collaborate well because I know that, in the end, it's Mark's show and the costumes are only there to serve his vision," he told GO Brooklyn. "I have tons of input, but when Mark says something, it's got to be the last word."

And he isn't just following orders because he's scared of his old friend. "What inspires me about Mark's work is his unerring sense of music. More than a choreographer, I think he's the best musician I know."

MUSIC

Get fierce

It's a big name for a not-so-big cause.

Funky folkster Toshi Reagon will headline a benefit for the queer youth organization Fabulous Independent Educated Radicals for Community Empowerment (FIERCE!) on May 4 at Southpaw.

Reagon, a Crown Heights resident, learned about merging activism and music from growing up surrounded by the groovy gospel of her mother's celebrated a cappella ensemble, Sweet Honey in the Rock. But Reagon added in influences of her own — including Stevie Wonder, Prince and even Kiss — since she dropped out of college to open for Lenny Kravitz on his first world tour.

Reagon might have a polished pop resume, but she's no stranger to a fight, having lent her voice to causes as diverse as Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn and Women's Health Care in New Orleans.

Toshi Reagon will perform at Southpaw (125 Fifth Ave., at Sterling Place in Park Slope) at 8 pm on May 4. Tickets are \$20. For information, call (718) 230-0236 or visit www.toshiareagon.com.

—Christopher Murray

DINING

La Primavera

For five months each year, the Red Hook ball fields are as unwelcoming as the Dakota ballfields. But in late April, they awaken with the sights of soccer and baseball — and the smells of Central American food.

Though the "tubob" legends of Liga Mexico and Liga Guatemala showcase some real talent and aerial dramatics, the premiere attraction is the vendors.

Lining the fields are stands serving Guatemalan tamales, Salvadoran pupusas and more. It is all delicious and fantastically cheap — for \$5, you can stuff yourself silly.

Across the street is the Red Hook Recreational Center, with its mammoth swimming pool open from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Be sure to bring a padlock and a real bathing suit (no cutoffs!), as the Stazi-like guards will send you away if you don't have them.

The Red Hook Recreation Center (155 Bay St., between Henry and Clinton streets in Red Hook) is open Monday through Friday from 8 am-10 pm and on Saturday from 8 am-5 pm. The ballfields and vendors are directly across the street.

—John O'Connor

ART

Different icon

Despite what it might sound like, "Postmillennial Black Madonna" is not the latest incarnation of a certain pop star. It's a two-part exhibition, co-curated by Danny Simmons, featuring 23 artists exploring issues of race and religion as they apply to the themes of both "Prada" and "Inferno."

The former theme's exhibit looks beyond the classic definition of the Madonna into how women of color have influenced religion throughout the ages.

"The idea is that there are not just focusing on Christianity," Kimberli Gant, MoCADA's Director of Education, told GO Brooklyn. "But there is a dark, strong female goddess in many religions."

The second part, the show, "Inferno," is currently up at the Skylight Gallery in Bedford-Stuyvesant.

Why two parts? After all, Simmons has his own gallery. Gant explained the mystery: "The exhibition, like the Madonnas, has a dual personality."

"Postmillennial Black Madonna" will be at MoCADA (80 Hanson Pl., at South Portland Avenue in Fort Greene) through May 13 and at Skylight Gallery (1368 Fulton St., at Brooklyn Avenue in Bedford-Stuyvesant) through May 5. For information, visit www.posttime.com.

—Adam Rathe

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Hats off

Windsor Terrace channels the Middle East with Fez

By Tina Barry
for The Brooklyn Paper

On a recent Saturday afternoon, I wandered into Fez Restaurant in Windsor Terrace. The dining room was nearly empty. The proprietor and chef, Bahija Elmourabit, noticed my perplexed expression and laughed. "Look in the back," she said.

I walked through the long, narrow dining room and into a garden so bucolic it made the diners — and me — grin like idiots. The tables were filled with couples and families sitting beneath the white cloth umbrellas just loving the warm air, the flowers and, of course, the food.

By evening, the temperature had dropped, so my guests and I opted for a beautiful table with inlaid marble inside Fez's dining room. The gold-walled space, hung with photos of Morocco, is peaceful, with candles and quiet music. With babies sleeping in carriages and couples sipping wine, Fez is the best kind of neighborhood place.

Elmourabit was one of the first restaurateurs to recognize Windsor Terrace as an area on its way up. In 2001, she launched the tiny 16th Street Gourmet, a storefront with room a takeout counter. She followed that modest success with the more ambitious Fez last summer.

Little touches elevate Elmourabit's fare from the usual Middle Eastern and Moroccan offerings. There is a charcoal grill that Elmourabit uses to sear meat and some of the vegetables for her salads. It's that smoky grill flavor that also makes all the difference in the baba ghanoush.

The savory eggplant dip is part of the sumptuous "maza" plate of salads and pureses that we shared at the table. The "baba," served with warm pita triangles, was accompanied by a rich hummus, chunks of ruby-colored beets in a sprightly lemon and parsley dressing and tabbouleh, the Middle East's ubiquitous cracked wheat, parsley and mint salad.

DINING

Fez Restaurant (240 Prospect Park West between Windsor Place and Prospect Avenue in Windsor Terrace) accepts American Express, Discover, MasterCard and Visa. Lunch specials: \$8 for three courses. Entrees: \$9.50-\$19.95. The restaurant serves lunch and dinner seven days a week. Brunch is available on weekends from 10 am-3 pm. Subway: F to Prospect Park/15th Street. For information, call (718) 369-0716.



Over the top: Fez owner Bahija Elmourabit, above right, serves inventive Middle Eastern dishes including homemade hummus, chicken tagine (above) and vegetable couscous (top left) which draw a crowd to the Windsor Terrace cafe.

We sipped wine from the bottle we brought (the wine and beer license is expected soon) and sampled slender "Moroccan cigars." Crisp and slightly greasy outside, the ground beef filling was pungent with cumin, garlic and white pepper; anise seeds added their licorice taste while crumbly Israeli feta cheese adding a pleasant sharpness.

"Tagines," stews cooked in deep, conical ceramic dishes of the same name, are the house specialty. We ordered the "Fez" tagine, one of the specials that evening, lifted off the heavy lid, and the aroma of rich meat

and spices made us sigh. One huge, slow-cooked lamb shank carried meat so tender it needed only a nudge with the fork to fall away from the bone.

Chunks of roasted eggplant, tomatoes and celery were cooked until soft like caponata, but instead of the sweet and tart tang of the Italian version, the vegetables and meat are perfumed with a heady mix of garlic, fresh bay leaves and saffron. The dish comes with a bowl of moist, yellow basmati rice. On other occasions, I've ordered tagines with meat or seafood and fruit, like the chicken



with caramelized apricots and prunes, and the lamb with green olives and preserved lemons. They're just as lush and complex as the special.

From that charcoal grill comes "kofla" (ground beef with cumin), kebabs and "merguez," the aromatic lamb sausage. All are seasoned with a sure hand and retain their moisture.

When charcoal grill meets fresh tuna steak, though, there's true chemistry. Elmourabit sears the edges of the fish so they're smoky, yet leaves the center rare. A light sauce of orange and mustard freshens and lends bite to the fish's sirlion-like flavor. Then, the fish is laid atop a salad of crisp cucumber squares and tomatoes in a bright lemon dressing. The dish was as transporting as the morning in the garden with the warm breeze blowing.

After those two entrees, the vegetable couscous — made with zucchini, carrots, turnips, chickpeas and tomatoes — seemed bland. With a spoonful of hot "harissa" (a North African condiment made with chiles, garlic, oil and spices), the vegetarian at our table was content.

The only downside to the menu is the desserts. The roundup varies, but what I've tried — a chocolate mousse cake and a French apple pie with vanilla ice cream — are too ordinary to make a fitting conclusion to such a multi-dimensional meal. I'd opt for the house-made "baklava" (phyllo layered with honey and nuts) and a pot of mint tea. The brew comes in a silver keftap and is poured into lovely midnight blue glasses etched in gold. The simplicity and perfection of that finale captures the experience of Fez.

The luncheonette that isn't

It's not their fathers' luncheonette.

Dina and Demetri Kachulis are now running the Park Luncheonette — the Williamsburg lunch counter that their forebears opened in 1931 to feed the area's factory workers.

Times — and neighborhoods — change, so the third generation Kachulis revamped the small dining room and brought in a new chef, Jason Dreclik (formerly of Artisanal and the Old Homestead in Manhattan).

Dina and Demetri even got rid of lunch, making the place a luncheonette in name only.

Also missing is the joint's famed soda counter, another victim of the renovation. But Dina Kachulis vows that the place is true to its founders' spirit (heck, the retro feel even drew Martin Scorsese to film some scenes for "The Departed").

"We tried to keep the place as original as we can," she said of the recent renovation. "The tin ceilings and walls, the bar and even the sign outside are the same."

Even traditionalists admit that they like having more tables near the window — giving diners a great view of McCarren park.

The menu is the biggest change. Dreclik offers dishes like diver scallops on toasted



broche with guacamole; and a grilled salmon with caper beurre blanc sauce that the customers of yore could never have dreamt of. There's a full liquor license and small international wine list, too, but neither impresses the older customers, who still wander in demanding an egg cream.

Park Luncheonette (334 Driggs Ave., at Lorimer Street in Williamsburg) ac-

cepts American Express, Diners Club, Discover, MasterCard and Visa. Entrees: \$9-\$19.95. Dinner is served through Sunday. Brunch is available on weekends from 10 am. Subway: G to Nassau Avenue; L to Bedford Avenue. For information, call (718) 383-5571 or visit www.parkluncheonette.com.

— Tina Barry



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Let's grow

Flex your green thumb with do's and don'ts of urban gardening

By Emily Farris
for The Brooklyn Paper

With Earth Day right behind us, summer on its way, and global warming all around, Brooklynites have gardening on the brain. But if you don't live in Carroll Gardens or weren't lucky enough to score a garden apartment, you're left with limited options. So, GO Brooklyn's Emily Farris sat down with Carmen DeVito of Outside NY, the recently opened urban gardening store in Williamsburg, to get some basic training on the Dos and Don'ts of gardening in a place where space and time — and sometimes light — are at a minimum.

Do your research.

"The most important thing when planning a garden is to consider your existing conditions and research what plants that will do well in them," DeVito warned us. Think about how much wind or light your garden will get; don't put a shade-loving plant on your roof. Also, consider how much space you have and how big the plants will get. "Sometimes people plant a bunch of little things and before they know it, the garden is overgrown." Most impor-

GARDENING

Outside NY (99 N. 10th St., between Wythe Avenue and Berry Street in Williamsburg) will host a "DIY Container Gardening Workshop" on May 3, at 3 p.m. For information, call (718) 782-4800 or visit www.outsidenyny.com.

tant, be realistic about how much time you'll have to care for your garden. If you won't be around to water it, you will have planted in vain.

Do use organic fertilizers.

"They improve the soil structure — not just feed the plants. It's more of a long-term benefit," DeVito said. Her favorites are Big Bloom (\$14.50 for 32 ounces), which is mixed with water and a granular fertilizer made from dehydrated chicken poop called, what else?, Cockadoodle DOO (\$12 for six pounds).

Do make gardening a group activity.

Many plants require watering twice a day in the summer, so if you live in a building with a shared roof deck, get your neighbors involved. "If you make it a collective, then you can take turns



Hot topic: Follow Outside NY owner Carmen DeVito's tips and your window sill will bloom. The store, shown above, also offers classes in urban gardening techniques.

watering," DeVito said.

Do have fun.

And if you know that you don't have time to care for a garden, or are just too lazy to walk the six flights of stairs to the roof twice a day, do what this reporter did and get some wheatgrass for your window sill.

Don't choose heavy containers for rooftop gardens.

DeVito suggested using pots made of lightweight materials, like fiberglass, polypropylene and plastic, for rooftop gardens — especially in older build-

ings. Also, consider the weight of the soil and the plant. "Most people don't know that 12 square feet of soil, when wet, weighs 100 pounds, so err on the side of caution," she said.

Don't block your fire escape.

While it's technically illegal to put planters — or anything else — on a fire escape in New York City, everybody does it. And if you're going to break the law, just be careful not to make your apartment inescapable in case of a fire. "You don't want to wade through a forest and endanger yourself and your fellow tenants for a garden," DeVito advised.

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That's what friends are for

On April 28, riding the wave of last year's duets record, "My Friends and Me," legendary songstress Dionne Warwick will take the stage at Brooklyn Center. We know that the Divine Miss W is a busy woman — after all, she's hard at work in the lab, developing the "Envy" brand of skin care products and the "Dionne" fragrance being hawked on her Web site — so we didn't expect to get hours of time with the singer. But all we got was an interview by e-mail — and even then, Warwick didn't seem to give us the time of day, answering our questions in the terse manner of a scat singer. Perhaps if we had called the Psychic Friends Network and paid \$1.99 a minute, we might have gotten a full conversation!

— Adam Rathe



Dionne Warwick

GO: Brooklyn: Welcome to Brooklyn! What's your favorite thing about the borough?

Dionne Warwick: I have no ties to Brooklyn directly, but do have very fond memories of the Murray the K's Brooklyn Fox shows.

GO: It's been almost 40 years since you received your first Grammy award. How has the music business changed for you in that time?

DW: The business has changed drastically.

GO: You've done quite a bit of work on behalf of AIDS and world hunger charities. What are you up to these days?

DW: I'm still in the fight against AIDS, as we all should be.

GO: How are today's concerts different from the shows your fans might have seen in the past?

DW: I'll be doing the songs that those coming to the show will want to hear.

GO: What songs can we expect to hear at the concert?

DW: You have to come to the show to know.

GO: Brooklyn is set to be a stop on the Hampton's Jitney for the first time ever this summer. What are your summer vacation plans?

DW: I will be on tour.

GO: Did you enjoy your turn on "American Idol" last season? Any plans to return to television?

DW: "Idol" was a bunch of fun and yes, TV shows are on the agenda.

GO: Do you have any more duets planned for the future? Will any of your singing partners from "My Friends and Me" be stopping by Brooklyn Center?

DW: Yes, a male version of "My Friends and Me" will be recorded soon. And I wish I could say yes, but unfortunately [no guests will be there].

CORRECTION

In our April 21 edition, we incorrectly stated the name of the actress who played August Howe's sister in "The Mound Builders." The correct actress is Deborah Harris. GO Brooklyn regrets the error.

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A new singer puts her stamp on Brooklyn's soul scene

By Danielle Douglas
for The Brooklyn Paper

Amid the clamoring of glasses and shouts of boisterous laughter typical of a Saturday night at Grand Dakar, a six-piece band set up instruments and microphone stands rarely unnoticed. As one of the three microphones began to sputter, the chanteuse giggled, seemingly surprised by the power of her voice.

"Good evening everyone, pardon the technical difficulties as we warm up. I am Rhonda Dene and this is the Rhonda Dene Project and this is the Rhonda Dene Project."

And with a three count leading into a rendition of Anita Baker's "Sweet Love," Dene's talent company kicked off an evening of eclectic selections. Within a few hours, the vocalist managed to

put a soulful spin on everything from Journey's "Don't Stop Believing" to Tears for Fears' postapocalyptic "Everybody Wants to Rule the World."

Not too many R&B singers would venture to cover campy '80s fare like Journey, but Dene's is undaunted. "It doesn't matter what the interpretation of those pieces are, they are really soul songs that can lend themselves to any genre," she told GO Brooklyn.

Besides, anyone who can riff like Aretha Franklin could probably breathe new life into just about anything (even Journey).

"Her sound is perfectly accented to what we are trying to achieve here," said Grand Dakar's owner, Pierre Thian, "showcasing culture from the African Diaspora."

Dene says her music is influenced



Belt it out: Rhonda Dene and her band bring soul classics and interpretations of modern pop to Grand Dakar in Clinton Hill each Saturday night.

by the artists she grew up listening to: Stevie Wonder, Ella Fitzgerald and Duran Duran. "Music is suppose to make you feel good; bring joy and bliss," said Dene. "And that's what I hope to do."

As in sync as the Rhonda Dene Project is, it's hard to believe that the group has only been together for five weeks. But it's a testament to the back-up singers Frank H. Carter III and Pantera St. Montaigne, pianist Chris Forbes, bass player Phil "Sumi" Smith and drummer Chuck Balfour have a combined 35 years of experi-

ence. Previously, Dene had only performed with a bassist and percussionist, recruiting the full band once she landed the weekly gig at Dakar.

Dene started performing at Grand Dakar completely by chance. Dineg there one night, she met Thian and gave him her demo CD. Within a few days, Thian had booked her.

"She has a wonderful voice that fits perfectly with the ambience of the restaurant," said Thian. And whether it's Donnie Hathaway or Depeche Mode, Dene's got it all covered.

9 DAYS...

Continued from page 2

Studio, 3 pm and 6 pm.

PAPER MOON PLAYERS: "Bravo Broadway" 3:30 pm. See Sat., April 28.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE: "Annie Get Your Gun" 7 pm. See Sat., April 28.

CHILDREN

UNIVERSITY CIRCUS: Family entertainment features acts from around the world. \$17.50 to \$25 adults, \$15.50 to \$23 kids 10 and under, 1 pm, 4 pm and 7 pm. Prospect Park. Enter park at Parkside and Ocean avenues. www.universycircus.com

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Mon, April 30

CONCERT: St. Francis College presents a program of guitar music: 12:30 pm, 180 Remsen St. (718) 489-5352. Free.

SEMINAR FOR ARTISTS: Brooklyn Arts Council hosts "Sharing Our Art: Embracing Our Information System for BAC Artists." Learn how artists can develop workshops for youths in conjunction with the Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch. 4 pm to 6 pm. Grand Avenue Plaza, (718) 230-2100. Free.

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MEXICAN DANCE: Brooklyn Public Library's New Utrecht branch hosts a "Dance Workshop." 3:30 pm, 1743 86th St. (718) 236-6886. Free.

MARKETING ON A BUDGET: Church Avenue Merchants Business Association hosts a class for small businesses, 6 pm to 8:30 pm. 884 Flatbush Ave. Pre-registration necessary. (718) 282-5200. ext. 242. Free.

DINNER MEETING: The Columbia Lawyers Association of Brooklyn hosts a meeting, Honorable Luciano Suarez, Presiding Justice of the Appellate Term, First Judicial District. He offers a talk, "Summary Jury Trial." 4 pm. Rex Manor, 1100 60th St. Reservations required. Call for fee info. (718) 975-0158.

KABBALAH: Congregation B'nai Avraham hosts a talk "The Art of Blessing" with Rabbi Yakov Travis. 7:30 pm to 9 pm. 117 Remsen St. Advance registration recommended. (718) 596-4840.

BARNES AND NOBLE: hosts a fiction writing workshop, 7:30 pm, 267 Seventh Ave. (718) 832-9066. Free.

WEDS, MAY 2

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LECTURE: St. Francis College lecture on the Indian middle class. 12:00 pm to 1:45 pm. 180 Remsen St. (718) 489-5214. Free.

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UNIVERSITY CIRCUS: Family entertainment features acts from around the world. \$17.50 to \$25 adults, \$15.50 to \$23 kids 10 and under, 10:30 am and 7:30 pm. Prospect Park. Enter park at Parkside and Ocean avenues. www.universycircus.com

MEXICAN DANCE: Brooklyn Public Library's New Utrecht branch hosts a "Dance Workshop." 3:30 pm, 1743 86th St. (718) 236-6886. Free.

MARKETING ON A BUDGET: Church Avenue Merchants Business Association hosts a class for small businesses, 6 pm to 8:30 pm. 884 Flatbush Ave. Pre-registration necessary. (718) 282-5200. ext. 242. Free.

DINNER MEETING: The Columbia Lawyers Association of Brooklyn hosts a meeting, Honorable Luciano Suarez, Presiding Justice of the Appellate Term, First Judicial District. He offers a talk, "Summary Jury Trial." 4 pm. Rex Manor, 1100 60th St. Reservations required. Call for fee info. (718) 975-0158.

KABBALAH: Congregation B'nai Avraham hosts a talk "The Art of Blessing" with Rabbi Yakov Travis. 7:30 pm to 9 pm. 117 Remsen St. Advance registration recommended. (718) 596-4840.

BARNES AND NOBLE: hosts a fiction writing workshop, 7:30 pm, 267 Seventh Ave. (718) 832-9066. Free.

WEDS, MAY 2

PLANT SALE: Annual event at Brooklyn Botanic Garden. One-stop shopping for all garden needs. Thousands of plants on sale. 9 am to 7 pm. 1000 Washington St. (718) 623-7200.

MARKETING EXPO: Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce day of networking, exhibits, seminars and more. Keynote speaker is John Jettich, author of "Direct Tape Marketing: The World's Most Practical Small Business Marketing Guide." 9 am to 2:30 pm. Grand Prospect Arts Studio, 20 Lafayette Ave. (718) 636-4100.

CANASTA CLUB: Brooklyn Canasta Club seeks all players for new groups. 9:30 am to 3:30 pm. Call for information and for reservations. (718) 603-4084.

LECTURE: St. Francis College lecture on the Indian middle class. 12:00 pm to 1:45 pm. 180 Remsen St. (718) 489-5214. Free.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE: Fort

9 DAYS...

Continued from page 2

Studio, 3 pm and 6 pm.

PAPER MOON PLAYERS: "Bravo Broadway" 3:30 pm. See Sat., April 28.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE: "Annie Get Your Gun" 7 pm. See Sat., April 28.

CHILDREN

UNIVERSITY CIRCUS: Family entertainment features acts from around the world. \$17.50 to \$25 adults, \$15.50 to \$23 kids 10 and under, 1 pm, 4 pm and 7 pm. Prospect Park. Enter park at Parkside and Ocean avenues. www.universycircus.com

FAMILY CONCERT: Traditional South African Zulu music with Danes. \$20, \$10 kids 6 pm. Kane Street Synagogue, 236 Kane St. (718) 965-1111.

OTHER

PET ADOPTION: Cats, kittens, dogs and puppies. Proof of ID and adoption fee required. 1 pm to 5 pm. Lutheran Family Center, 6025 Sixth Ave., at 60th St. (718) 966-1362.

CAFE STENOGRAPH: presents the movie: "Foxy" (1980). 10:30 pm. 422 Seventh Ave. (718) 900-7776. Free.

SILENT AUCTION: PLG Arts (718) 411-1225, a silent auction for a benefit. Final day to place a bid 9 am to 7 pm. K.O. and Denbury College, 43 Lincoln Rd. To bid online, visit: www.danetonline.com/online. Enter username: LUGarts; password: auction. For more info, contact lucienplgarts.org.

Mon, April 30

CONCERT: St. Francis College presents a program of guitar music: 12:30 pm, 180 Remsen St. (718) 489-5352. Free.

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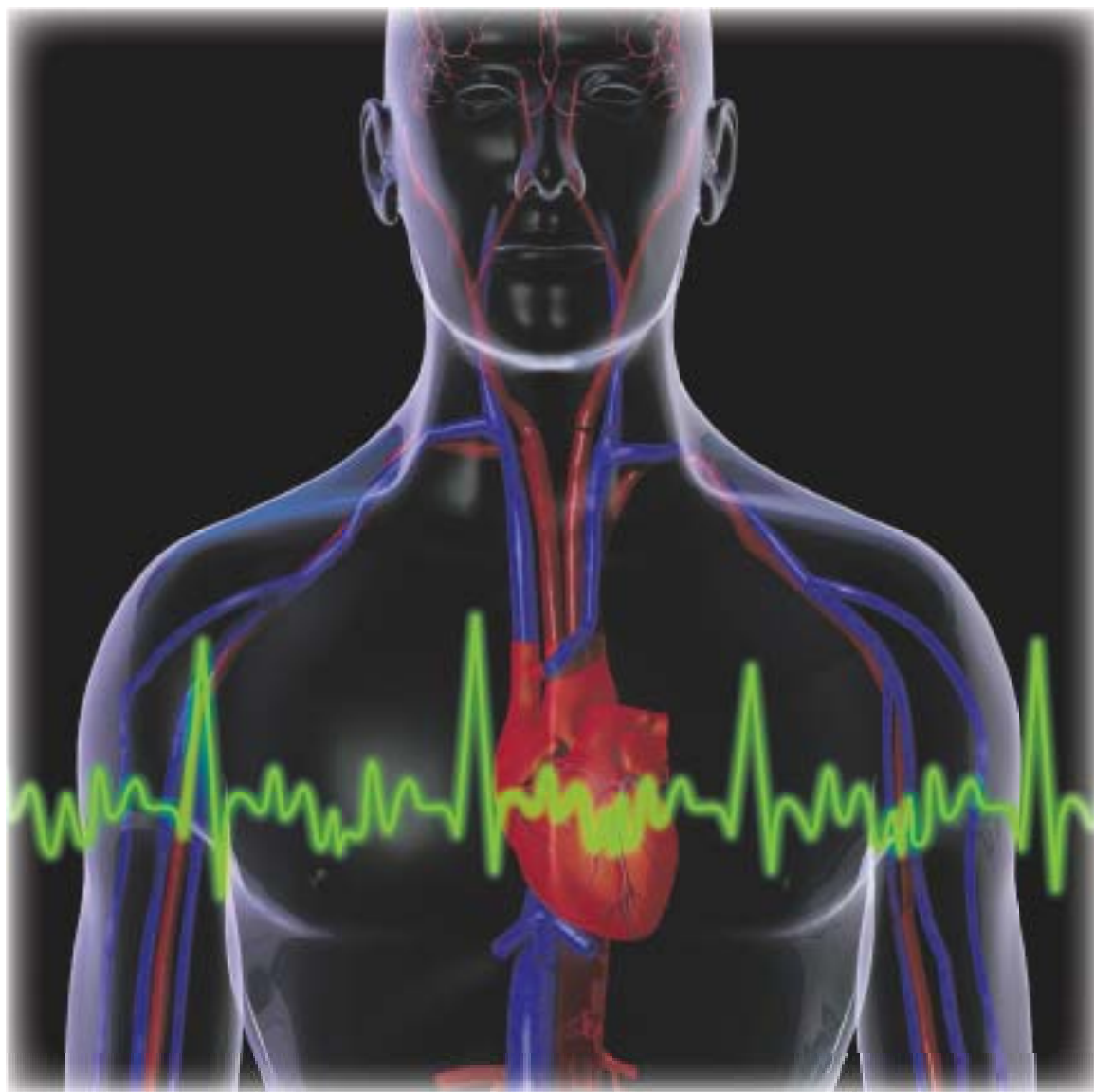
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Atrial fibrillation, a growing problem.



Maimonides Atrial Fibrillation Center, a growing solution.

Atrial fibrillation is an irregular heartbeat. Its symptoms often include episodes of rapid heartbeat, shortness of breath, fatigue, and dizziness.

Almost 3 million Americans suffer from atrial fibrillation and by the year 2050 it is predicted that as many as 14 million of us will have it.

The good news for the people of Brooklyn, is that Maimonides Medical Center

already has an entire center dedicated to the treatment of this rapidly growing problem: the Atrial Fibrillation Center.

Taking a collaborative approach, the Atrial Fibrillation Center was formed through the efforts of cardiologists, cardiac surgeons, electrophysiologists and nurses to better serve patients with this debilitating condition. This unique approach means better, more individualized care for patients.

Because of our commitment to the treatment of atrial fibrillation, HealthGrades, America's leading hospital evaluator, has awarded us a Five-Star Rating, its highest rating, for four years in a row.

Maimonides Atrial Fibrillation Center. While most other hospitals in the country are on the fringe of treating this problem, it should be comforting for the people of Brooklyn to know we have an entire center dedicated to solving it.



Maimonides
Medical Center

Passionate about medicine.
Compassionate about people.

**Five-Star rated for treatment of atrial fibrillation
four years in a row by HealthGrades®**

In a cardiac emergency, call 911. For more information, visit www.maimonidesmed.org or call (888) MMC-DOCS (663-3627).

OUR OPINION

Good Bloomy, bad Bloomy

THE TWO FACES of Mayor Bloomberg are again on display. One day, the mayor is one of the nation's leading advocates of environmentally sound, community-sensitive, sensible development. The next day, he's a backroom crony greasing the wheels for a developer who ignored the community.

Let's start with "Good Bloomy." On Sunday, the mayor gave a great Earth Day speech that laid out an intelligent, cohesive vision for how the city will accommodate an expected influx of one million more residents, yet do so in an environmentally sensitive way.

He spoke of decking over highways and rail yards for new housing — and listening to community concerns about what that housing should look like and when it should benefit.

Good Bloomy was still on display on Monday, when the mayor's office announced that it had selected a developer for the site of a former big near the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

This plan for 484-units of housing — 77 per-

cent of which would be below-market-rate — is the very essence of good public planning, a development that is being built by one of the city's most-respected housing advocacy groups (the Pratt Area Community Council) and one of our best architecture firms (FXFOWLE).

The result, we believe, will benefit the community and add hundreds of units of affordable housing, yet not overburden the surrounding area.

So where was Good Bloomy when his administration ignored community concerns and rubberstamped Bruce Ratner's plan to deck over a state rail yard and build the densest census tract in the country?

Indeed, Good Bloomy's speech on Sunday suggested that the process that created Atlantic Yards is exactly what he doesn't want to happen again.

"As our search for land becomes more pressing in the coming decades, we must be prepared to work with communities to explore the potential of these sites," the mayor's

PlaNYC proposal says.

Whether you support Atlantic Yards or not, the fact remains that the state and the city willfully ignored the very community planning process Good Bloomy is now promoting. Before the state handed over the Vanderbilt rail yards to Bruce Ratner, a coalition of elected officials, residents and planners in Prospect Heights and Fort Greene put forth a blueprint for a development that was exactly the kind of project Good Bloomy is now championing.

Yet Bad Bloomy is still defending Atlantic Yards — though now that Good Bloomy is hawking PlaNYC, his Deputy Mayor Dan Doctoroff is at least sounding a bit more conciliatory.

"I think [Atlantic Yards] is an extreme case," he said on WNYC this week. "We don't do anything, anymore, really, without consulting the community."

Let's hope he's right. If so, the city will see more of Good Bloomy and less of Bad Bloomy.

ALL DRAWN OUT



Chris Posing

LETTERS

Cash and carry: Reader warns of deep pockets

To the editor,

I know we're supposed to blame the perpetrators and not the victims when crimes are committed, but in your last issue, you reported that a woman lost \$3,000, her birth certificate, and her Social Security card at 5:15 pm in Downtown Brooklyn ("Elderly lady snagged in pimple scam," Brooklyn Heights-Downtown Edition, April 14).

I can understand a person's carrying an ATM card, a driver's license and a job ID. But aren't the victims encouraging the criminals by ambling about with thousands in cash?

Harvey Karten, Downtown

No excuses!

To the editor,

3 cheers for Herbie the Hereford

To the editor,

I really appreciated Matthew Lysiak's update on Herbie the Hereford ("Herbie the cow in Hereford Heaven," Bay Ridge Edition, April 7), the slaughterhouse bovine who had a beef and then went on the lam.

The cute picture of Herbie reminded me that this was simply an animal who never meant to do anyone harm, yet only got noticed by the public because he ran away.

That picture reminded me that one some level, we are all Herbie — trapped animals seeking a way out of our fates.

Just seeing a picture of Herbie — living free and easy in the country — gives me reassurance that maybe we can all be so successful at shaking off the chains of our daily lives.

Any chance I can get you to publish another Herbie shot?

Reginald Perline, Bay Ridge



We'll do anything for our readers.

Regarding your recent story on Rep. Yvette Clarke's lone vote against retaining that library on Ellis Island after Bob Hope ("No Hope for Yvette," April 14), I bet if they wanted to name the center after Martin Luther King that Clarke would have had no problem. What in heavens name does Bob Hope have to do with slavery? He has as much to do with it as you or I.

That is the past; history is supposed to be used as a lesson, not an excuse. Clarke is just mean-spirited. Bob Hope came here legally as a small child, and made himself into an icon through hard work and determination.

It is a wonder that any kids progress today considering the doom-and-gloom rhetoric they are fed. What would Martin Luther King, Frederick Douglass, and Rosa Parks think? Ha!

As for Bob Hope, he visited all the troops, not only white soldiers. When the bill passes, Rep. Clarke will be only one color: yellow — the color of a lemon.

Janet Di Bernardo, Park Slope

Credit where due

To the editor,

It was a pleasure to read that the Montauk Club is thriving in 2007 ("New blood tries to save Slope's Montauk Club," April 14). However, your article skipped over an important portion of its history: the 1970s

and '80s, when all those new brownstoners came together at the Club's social functions under the leadership of Dino Venenice.

There were no bounds to his devotion to the club and its members, and because of his efforts, the Montauk Club remains around to be enjoyed by a new generation.

Mary Lee Bedford, Bay Ridge

Visa Narrows?

To the editor,

The tolls on the Verrazano Bridge are out of control. To help reduce the toll — which is \$9! — I think Mayor Bloomberg should sell the naming rights to the bridge to a large company like Citibank, Bank of America or Visa.

If sports arenas and stadiums can do it, why not a bridge? It may not defray the full cost of the toll, but perhaps bring it down to \$5.

I hope someone will form an exploratory committee!

Joseph P. Martino, Bay Ridge

Blame the boomers

To the editor,

If this hero professor from the Virginia Tech massacre had been a baby boomer, we know exactly what he would have done: pushed aside those kids and saved himself ("Killer's toll felt here," April 14).

Thankfully for the 10 young lives that the professor saved, he was part of a generation

that viewed blind self-indulgence and self-absorption as things to be reviled, not things to be celebrated.

Blaine Hislop, Calgary, Alberta

Save the Promenade

To the editor,

Looking over the four proposals your paper presented last week, I choose the tunnel proposal, number 3 ("Heights bridge to the future," April 14).

Please tell planners not to mess with the Brooklyn Heights Promenade.

I do not live in Brooklyn, but Brooklyn lives in me.

Reginald Wiczerzak, Chelsea

Help the competition

Gersh Kuntzman's thoroughly enjoyable article detailing Illinois Sen. Barack Obama's increasing popularity in Brooklyn ("Obama hits Brooklyn," The Brooklyn Angle, April 7) hit all the right notes.

But is it "Obamania" as Mr. Kuntzman writes, or "Obamaniamania" as I have seen elsewhere?

I, for one, think "Obamaniamania" sounds better. Please advise.

Jotham Sederstrom, Prospect Heights
The writer is a reporter for the New York Daily News. Editor's note: Don't they have a style book at the Daily News? Ours says "Obamania."

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We hope everyone appreciates our free home delivery, but realize there are exceptions to every rule.

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By e-mail: Letters@BrooklynPaper.com

By mail: Letters Editor, The Brooklyn Paper, 55 Washington St., Brooklyn, NY 11201.

By fax: (718) 834-9278.

All letters must be signed and include the writer's home address and phone number (only the writer's name and neighborhood are published with the letter). Letters may be edited and will not be returned. The earlier in the week you send your letter, the better.

HELP THE PLANET. GO GREEN.

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\$100 per child. Camp is closed July 4th and July 24 (Tisha B'Av)



TICKETS ON SALE

SUNDAY, APRIL 29TH at 9am

2007 PROMOTIONAL SCHEDULE

- 6/19 **Schedule Magnet** ^A presented by Pay-O-Matic **OPENING DAY!**
- 6/21 **Home Plate Stone** ^B presented by KeySpan
- 6/23 **Piggy Bank** ^C presented by New York's 529 College Savings Direct Plan
- 6/24 1957 Night - Joe Pignatano & Danny McDevitt Appearance
- 6/25 **Tailgate Chair** ^B presented by Lutheran Medical Center - Faith Night
- 6/26 **Jersey Backpack** ^B presented by Dime Savings Bank - Pay Your Weight Night
- 6/27 **Schedule Pen** ^B presented by SUNY Downstate Medical Center - Lucky Hot Dog Night
- 7/5 Latino Heritage Night presented by Maimonides Medical Center - Appearance by Reggy
- 7/7 **Souvenir Baseball** ^B
- 7/8 Ralph Branca Appearance - Game presented by HBO
- 7/9 **Green T-Shirt** ^D and Irish Heritage Night presented by Budweiser and WFAN
- 7/17 **Baseball Cap** ^B presented by Long Island University - Appearance by The ZOOperstars
- 7/18 **Scrubs** ^B presented by Maimonides Medical Center
- 7/19 **Thunderstix** ^B presented by Nutrament - Brooklyn's Got Talent
- 7/20 Fireworks - FDNY Night - Game presented by Parenting Magazine
- 7/21 Classic Car Show
- 7/22 **Don Newcombe Bobblehead** ^B and Appearance - Autism Awareness Night
- 7/27 Fireworks
- 7/29 **28" Wooden Bat** ^C - Jewish Heritage Night
- 8/5 **Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz Bobblehead** ^B
- 8/6 Camp Day - 12 noon First Pitch
- 8/10 Fireworks - Principal Financial Group Family Fun Fest
- 8/11 **Comic Coloring Book** ^C - Super Hero Night
- 8/12 **Ebbets Field Model** ^D - Photo Day - Soccer Night
- 8/16 **Willie Randolph Bobblehead** ^B presented by Atlantis Health Plan
- 8/17 **T-Shirt** ^B and EMS Night presented by Midwood Ambulance - Fireworks - Appearance by Rally
- 8/20 **Lee Mazzilli Bobblehead** ^B and Italian Heritage Night
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- 8/22 **Beer Glass** ^D presented by Miller Brewing Company - Military Night
- 8/23 Bark in the Park - Medieval Times Night
- 8/24 Fireworks - Biker Night
- 8/28 **Replica Jersey** ^B presented by Gargiulo's Restaurant - Pay Your Weight Night II
- 9/1 **Fleece Blanket** ^C
- 9/3 **Garage Sale Giveaway** ^B presented by New York's 529 College Savings Direct Plan
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A - First 7,500 into the ballpark. B - First 2,500 into the ballpark. C - First 1,250 kids into the ballpark. D - First 2,000 adults (21 and over) into the ballpark.
Promotional items and dates are subject to change.

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\$6-\$14!**

April 29th at **KEYSPAN PARK**

- Meet Johnny Podres - FREE AUTOGRAPHS**
- Take Batting Practice on the field***
- Get a FREE *Nathan's* Combo Meal***
- Music, Clowns, Giveaways & more!!!**

(* First 200 to purchase tickets in person)



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